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# More working poor Canadians use food banks

FROM THE COVER OF *FOOD FOR THOUGHT*

*Visiting food banks is becoming a way of life for more working Canadians*

**Alan Doerksen**

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. — Are Canadians suffering from malnutrition? Yes, they are, say food bank workers.

Recently, a man in his 50s who was on social assistance and was a regular client of Project SHARE, a Niagara Falls agency for the poor, died of malnutrition. He was homeless from time to time and came to the agency for about three years. Most of his money was used to pay rent in a motel. Out of the $520 a month many Ontarians get as welfare payments, $400 often goes to cover rent, leaving little money for anything else.

Compared to 10 years ago, low-income people have a harder time making ends meet, says a food bank director in Winnipeg. In 1988, a single person needed to work 44 hours a week at minimum wage to meet the poverty line, but now he or she would need to work 62 hours, while a single mother with two children would have to work 96 hours a week.

## Working poor need help

Even though the economy has been improving and the jobless rate dropping in much of Canada, 5.4 per cent more Canadians, including 40 per cent more Nova Scotians, are using food banks than at this time last year.

What's new is that food bank users are not only people on social assistance, but also the "working poor," according to a new survey from the Canadian Association of Food Banks (CAFB), entitled *Hunger Count 1998: Emergency Food Assistance in Canada*.

In March 1998 alone, 716,500 Canadians received emergency food hampers from food banks, reports the survey. Besides giving out groceries, food banks served 1,686,331 meals to people in need during that month. CAFB based its survey results on responses from 463 food banks across Canada.

## Low wages, no benefits

Clarence De Young, chairperson of the Metro Food Bank Society in Halifax, says the major increase in Nova Scotia's food bank usage is "a combination of things. Food bank usage goes up as unemployment goes up." But he says the province's unemployment rate has only risen slightly in the past year. In March, it was 10.5 per cent, slightly higher than the national average.

Downsizing is another reason for the increase, says De Young.

*See* **FORMER** *page 3...*

# *Oshawa pastor wants to revitalize established churches*

**Bert Witvoet**

OSHAWA, Ont. — Two years ago, Eugene Peterson, author of the biblical paraphrase *The Message* and professor at Regent College in Vancouver, told Henry Wildeboer: "Spend the bulk of your time preparing the next generation of leaders."

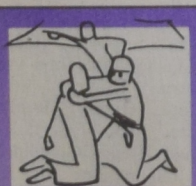
That advice made an impact on the then pastor of Zion Christian Reformed Church in Oshawa, Ont. Wildeboer had already focused on leadership as he taught courses at the Ontario Theological School, now called Tyndale College and Seminary. And his replacement, Rev. Arlan Koppendrayer, had started ministering at Zion two years before Peterson gave Wildeboer that advice.

"Leadership in the church is a crucial

*See* **PASTORS** *page 2...*

BERT WITVOET

*Wildeboer wants to give pastors and congregations a step-up in their ministry.*



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News

# *Pastors must make longterm commitments, says Wildeboer*

*... continued from page 1*

issue," says Wildeboer. "At seminary, ministers are not trained to be leaders, but servants and preachers," he adds. He sees pastors as the ones who should carry the vision, articulate it and motivate others in implementing it.

Today Wildeboer is teaching half-time at Tyndale College as director of the doctor of ministry program. The other half of his time he works for Christian Reformed Home Missions as regional director of established church development.

### A fresh approach

It's in this latter function that he and other regional directors hope to motivate older churches in their outreach ministry. (Someone like regional director John Van Til from London, Ont., works more in new church development.)

"We need to sort out who we are and what our place is in our culture," says Wildeboer. "We should try to make a contribution to that society which at the same time makes sense to the 18-year-old who has grown up in our church." He thinks that a fresh approach which will appeal to outsiders will also keep young members in church.

Wildeboer is encouraging pastors of established congregations to commit themselves for two years to a networking process that brings a cluster of six to 10 pastors and churches together under his leadership. The pastors and other church leaders will be asked to look at their lives and ministry, to help them focus or refocus so that they become more "gathering-oriented."

### A need for change

The big challenge for older churches is often to break out of their tradition-bound, inward-looking mode, according to Wildeboer. But for that to happen, significant changes have to happen. Churches have to focus on a celebrative ministry, engage lay ministers and develop leaders, organize small groups or cells and nurture a ministry-to-others approach.

Wildeboer wants churches to be sensitive to the communities around them. "How does the community respond to a 9:30 a.m. service?" he asks rhetorically. He urges long-time members to sacrifice some of their expectations from a worship service. "How effective is a 25-minute monologue?" he asks again. He would like to see churches make greater use of the arts, for example.

Wildeboer also believes that ministers have to drop the idea of staying in a church for only five years, emptying their bag of sermons and moving on to the next charge. What is needed are long-term commitments. The lasting impact of a leader comes after the sixth year, he says.

"The first three years, you need to be a servant, willing to do anything. Servanthood builds credibility. Once people trust you, you are allowed to lead."

*Churches should be sensitive to the communities around them.*

Wildeboer understands that effective leadership also produces conflict. Some of the resistance he has seen in churches can be demonic, he says. Some church members operate from a sense of power, are legalistic, hard and inflexible. "The Spirit of the Lord is missing in some of these conflicts," he says. "That's a core issue for the church."

### Good time for the church

There is a tremendous amount of interest in the program from both young and older pastors, says Wildeboer. "The idea is to make their ministry more effective and their life more enjoyable. God's people really want to serve the Lord. The CRC is a good church. The question is: How can we mobilize these people?"

Wildeboer is enthusiastic about the future. "It's a good day for the church," he says. "There is a revisiting of spirituality among many of the younger generation. All that Christian Reformed people have to do is get away from themselves, away from the issues and focus on service and proclamation.

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# Home Missions offers renewal for pastors and congregations

**Bert Witvoet**

OSHAWA, Ont. — The program which Dr. Henry Wildeboer and other regional directors are implementing on behalf of Christian Reformed Home Missions is called the Church Revitalization Network System or the ReFocusing Network.

In a pamphlet explaining the program, pastors are told: "We live in the post-Christian era. Society no longer considers the church a place to address the needs of today's world. Church is viewed by many as irrelevant and out of touch. To move into intentional mission ministry, we must change.... The fate of your church will rise and fall on the courage and spiritual integrity of its leaders."

Year One of the congregational leader's training consists of personal renewal for pastors. Year Two focuses on corporate renewal for churches.

Pastors are asked to examine their past, clarify their future and identify resources that will facilitate future growth. The ReFocusing Network fosters a supportive, mentoring environment. Pastors attend nine monthly meetings. The benefits of all this, Home Missions hopes, is "harvest-focused leaders and churches who are committed to raising up more and better disciples."

Each participant and church is asked to help with costs which cover materials, travel, telephone and small honorariums for facilitators and coaches. The cost per year is $200 for each participant and $200 for each church.

Groups will be started in Chatham-London (facilitators Jack Quartel and John Van Til); Niagara (Henry Lunshof); Toronto (Henry Wildeboer); Quinte (John Visser); Eastern Canada (Henry Gunnink). The last four regions will have a second facilitator appointed in due time.

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News

# CHP says trade deal 'threatens democracy'

CC Staff

OTTAWA — The Christian Heritage Party (CHP) charges that the federal government of Canada has undermined the sovereignty of Parliament with its pushing of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and its adherence to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). CHP is a small, conservative Christian political party which holds no parliamentary seats.

In a recent statement, CHP leader Ron Gray called attention to an August 13 report by George Monbiot in the well-known, left-of-centre British paper *The Guardian*, which Gray said "contains chilling news" and "has gone virtually unnoticed here in Canada."

Last month, Canada was ordered, under NAFTA, to pay $13 million in damages to the American-based multinational chemical giant Ethyl Corporation. Last year, Canada banned the sale of methylcyclopentadienyl manganese tricarbonyl (MMT), which until then, in the era of unleaded gasoline, had been added to gas in place of tetraethyl lead to prevent engine pinging. Many scientists believe MMT is a dangerous neurotoxin. They assert that manganese absorbed by the lungs causes nerve damage leading to psychosis, memory loss and early death.

Until 1997, Canada was the only country where MMT was actually sold. Although it is legal to sell MMT in most of the U.S., gas companies don't use it, because the auto manufacturers say it damages catalytic converters, increasing exhaust pollution. That probable health threat lay behind the Canadian Parliament's ban of MMT in April 1997.

### 'International implications'

Before the ban, Canada had allowed Ethyl to market MMT. But Ethyl protested the ban before a NAFTA tribunal, suing the Canadian government for "expropriating" its "property" (anticipated profits) and for "damage to its reputation" caused by the 1997 parliamentary debate on the substance.

CHP's Ron Gray notes that, according to *The Guardian*, "Ottawa allowed Ethyl to market a product that may be a health threat, and then lied to Canadians about that danger."

*The Guardian* asserted that the story has international implications because it "shows how the Multilateral Agreement on Investment can erode national sovereignty. It is the butterfly's wing over North America that will cause a hurricane in Europe."

Gray continues, "Had that [1997 parlimentary] vote taken place three years earlier, the Ethyl Corporation would have had to abide by the decision of a sovereign Parliament to protect its citizens from a deadly poison. But the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) entitles companies to sue governments if they believe they have raised unfair trade barriers."

The *Guardian* story pointed out that NAFTA rules allowing the Ethyl Corporation to sue the Canadian government are almost identical to provisions in the Multilateral Agreement on Investment. That agreement, said *The Guardian*, was designed to "harmonized investment standards in the rest of the world with North America."

### 'Secret' decisions

Gray notes that the NAFTA Tribunal's records are not published, and its decisions cannot be appealed.

He says that "the initial ban on MMT in Canada applied the same rules to foreign and domestic investors." But, he asserts, "the NAFTA appeal completely undercut the authority of our Parliament to pass such a law." He says the secrecy of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment is "a threat to democracy."

Gray also asserts that, "To the best of our knowledge, no one in Canada other than the CHP has yet revealed that current — and also secret — negotiations involving Canada in the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) include a now-complete, stand-alone treaty with every provision for regulating investment proposed for the MAI."

In March of this year, MAI opponents were able to force the 28 OECD (Office of Economic Co-operation and Development) governments to postpone the agreement.

Proponents of the MAI say it represents no threat to the democratic process, to workers or the environment. Ron Gray vehemently disagrees. He says Parliament must " defend its sovereignty, and protect [Canada's] rights to make [its] own laws."

# *Former managers among food bank users*

*... continued from page 1*

"We have had a lot of middle-management people who have been downsized," he says. Some of them now go to food banks.

More working poor people have been using the province's food banks because "many of them are at minimum wage or slightly higher, with no benefits," explains De Young. "We hear a lot about companies not paying benefits anymore."

Some people attribute the increase to abuse of the food bank system, but De Young disagrees.

Now that school has started again, the cost of school supplies has hit a lot of people, forcing them to go to food banks, says De Young. Recently, he got five calls from single mothers with kids who had bought school supplies and had run out of food money.

### Health problems eat up money

De Young tells of other food bank clients he has encountered recently. One is a young couple with health problems. "The poor lady has cancer, is blind and has seizures. The poor man has cancer and seizures," says De Young. Their medical bills range from $1,000 to $2,000 per month.

Another client was "an elderly lady of pension age. She spent her money on medication. When we went to see her, she should have been on medication but couldn't afford it."

Nova Scotia is also making changes to its welfare system, which is "definitely making it more difficult for poor people," De Young asserts.

Roxanne Felice, treasurer of CAFB, helped produce the survey report. Felice is also executive director of Project SHARE in Niagara Falls, Ont., an agency that runs a food bank and provides other essential services to needy people, such as housing help and advocacy.

In the past year, Project SHARE has seen a steady increase in clients of five to 10 per cent. "We're serving about 1,000 more [people] than last year," Felice confirms. She gives several possible reasons for the increase.

"Things have gotten better for people with money," says Felice. But for some people farther down the economic scale, things are getting worse.

In Ontario, welfare cuts have also led to greater food bank use, says Felice. Although Project SHARE has seen a five-to-10 per cent increase in clientele since last year, this is a small change compared to the 25-to-30 per cent increase experienced in 1995, after welfare changes in Ontario. Altogether since 1989, the agency has seen a 330 per cent increase in clientele and usage. And Felice sees no downturn on the horizon.

### 'Like lost souls'

"People don't come here because it's a nice thing to do," asserts Felice. "They come here because it's the last house on the block." She describes some clients as being "almost like lost souls. They are poor — they look poor. Some are not capable of doing anything else."

Like many food banks, Project SHARE usually gives food to a client only once a month. But this is not a strict rule. "We also have a policy that we don't turn anyone away," explains Felice. So if a needy person drops in more than once a month, agency workers will give them some food supplies. Some clients come two or three times a month, she says.

### Labor changes

Julia Bass, executive director of CAFB, sees changes to the Employment Insurance system as "one of the most important causes of increased food bank use." She observes that people have to work "a lot more months" to be eligible for EI.

And because of part-time and contract jobs, fewer people are eligible for EI at all after leaving a job. "Ten years ago, 80 per cent of the unemployed were on EI," says Bass. "Now, the comparative figure is 40 per cent."

Other changes in the labor market which Bass mentions indicate that "there are more jobs, but they're not necessarily good jobs. The job doesn't pay enough to support a family."

In Winnipeg, the food bank known as Winnipeg Harvest has seen an increased clientele of about seven per cent since last year, says executive director David Northcott. "The growth of the Manitoba food banks has been primarily from the working poor," he confirms. Even though the economy has been improving, the poor have been getting only a "trickle" of benefits, when they need a "flow."

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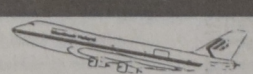

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Editorial

# Do you experience God's love first-hand?

If there is one experience we all crave, it is being loved by God. I'm talking about the *experience* of being loved. It's not enough to be reminded by Scripture that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life," is it?

Preaching and believing that is important. After all, faith is the means by which we appropriate salvation. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed," Jesus said to a doubting Thomas. But not to experience God's love first hand is unthinkable. Surely God does not expect us to keep our experiential feelings out of faith?

Imagine that your spouse's love were merely a matter of faith. You *believe* that he or she loves you, but you have never experienced it. Could that belief sustain you throughout your married life? I don't think so.

Or think about a situation in which your parents never show you that they love you. They *say* they love you, but you never get any sign of intimacy from them, not even a hug. You *believe* your parents love you because parents are *supposed* to love you, and it's unthinkable that your parents would not love you. Are you fooling yourself? Can you really bask in their love? I doubt it.

In the same way, it's not enough to be told that God loves you. You have to experience it. Jesus himself said to his disciples, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). To say that Jesus and his Father will come to you and make their home with you points to a real experience. When God, through his Holy Spirit, pitches his tent in your heart, you will know it. You will feel loved and special.

## An amazing answer

Philip Yancey, in his book *What's So Amazing About Grace*, talks about the importance of being liked and loved. "I know that self-image at the end of the day depends largely on what kind of messages I have received from other people," he writes. "Am I liked? Am I loved? I await the answers from my friends, my neighbors, my family — like a starving man, I await the answers."

But the greatest experience of all is grace, because grace gives you the answer you *really* need: *God* loves you. Yancey mentions how the Apostle John described himself as "the one Jesus loved." John took his identity not from his neighbors but from Jesus.

And then Yancey passes on a story about an Irish priest who, on a walking tour of his parish, comes across an old peasant kneeling by the side of the road, praying. Deeply impressed by the man's piety the priest says to the man: "You must be very close to God." The peasant looks up from his prayers, thinks for a while and then answers: "Yes, he's very fond of me."

What an amazing answer. How many of us would say that about God — about ourselves? Some of us may dare to say: "God loves me." But how many of us would say: "God is very fond of me"? What made this peasant say that? Obviously he had experienced that God had made his home in him, and he loved to visit with God. There was a mutual affection and familiarity that gave the man the courage and conviction to say that God enjoyed spending time with him.

## A gentle nudge

Maybe you are thinking that I am making a case for an extraordinary experience in which through a vision or miraculous intervention God shows you that he loves you. These things do happen, and when they do, we should treasure them.

I am thinking of a story told to me by Rev. Jerry Hoytema of Mountainview Christian Reformed Church in Grimsby, Ont. He and his colleague Rev. Richard deLange of Trinity CRC in St. Catharines, Ont., were kept from a serious accident as they returned from synod this year.

It was the middle of the night, and Hoytema was driving east along the 403, a six-lane divided highway near Hamilton, when he felt "the prompting of the Holy Spirit or the touch of an angel's hand on my shoulder" urging him to move from the left lane to the centre lane. At first Hoytema did not respond. The same prompting came a second time. This time Hoytema moved into the centre lane.

Not long after that, a utility vehicle, going in the wrong direction, came roaring toward them in the fast lane. Both men were shocked, yet grateful to God for his prompting. But they were even more amazed when the next day they read in the paper that the driver of this errant vehicle had smashed into another oncoming vehicle a few miles behind where Hoytema had passed him. A horrific picture told the story of how three people had been killed. Clearly, says Hoytema, the Lord had determined that our work on earth was not finished.

He and deLange somewhat reluctantly allowed me to tell this story because it was so personal and they did not want me to sensationalize it. If I were these men, I would treasure this experience as an affirmation of how God wants to use their ministry for his glory. It's a clear case of amazing grace. God must be very fond of these two pastors.

## The right place

I myself have had such a sign of affirmation from God. Before I even thought about becoming the editor of what was then known as *Calvinist Contact*, at a time when I was uncertain about my future, a sister in the Lord told me that God had revealed to her that an important job was waiting for me. Not long after that, the editorship of *Calvinist Contact* became available, and I applied. The rest is history.

But I have never forgotten the word of that sister, who had given a similar word of prophecy to her pastor, Rev. Louis Tamminga, before he was appointed to his position as head of the communications division of Christian Reformed World Missions in Grand Rapids, Mich. Her prophecy has served throughout the years of my editorship as an affirmation that God wanted to use me for his glory. Not that I ever used that affirmation as a sign of God's automatic approval of whatever I wrote or did as editor. That would have been an abuse of God's word for me and of my responsibility to listen to God's Word and to others. But I knew that I was in the right place, and that was a tremendous comfort to me.

## An intimate counselor

But these kinds of things don't happen often, even though many Christians can tell similar stories. Most of the time the experience that is given to us of God's love is the inner glow of feeling close to God and being strengthened and guided by the Spirit of truth. This was, after all, what Jesus had promised: "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor [other than Jesus, who was near the point of leaving this earth] to be with you forever" (vs. 16).

Being counseled by the Holy Spirit is a real experience of love and intimacy. In order to be the recipient of these experiences, we have to open ourselves to them by spending time in prayer and the reading of Scripture, by enjoying the communion of the saints, by eating and drinking the body and blood of the Lord Jesus, by quietly sitting somewhere and taking in the beauty of God's creation, by being ministered to by broken, sinful people, by doing God's will ("If you love me, you will obey what I command"), by triumphing over sin.

The amazing thing is that no one needs to miss out on God's love. God does not love Hoytema, deLange, Witvoet or Tamminga more than he loves you. God has no favorites. He is, after all, very fond of each of you. **BW**

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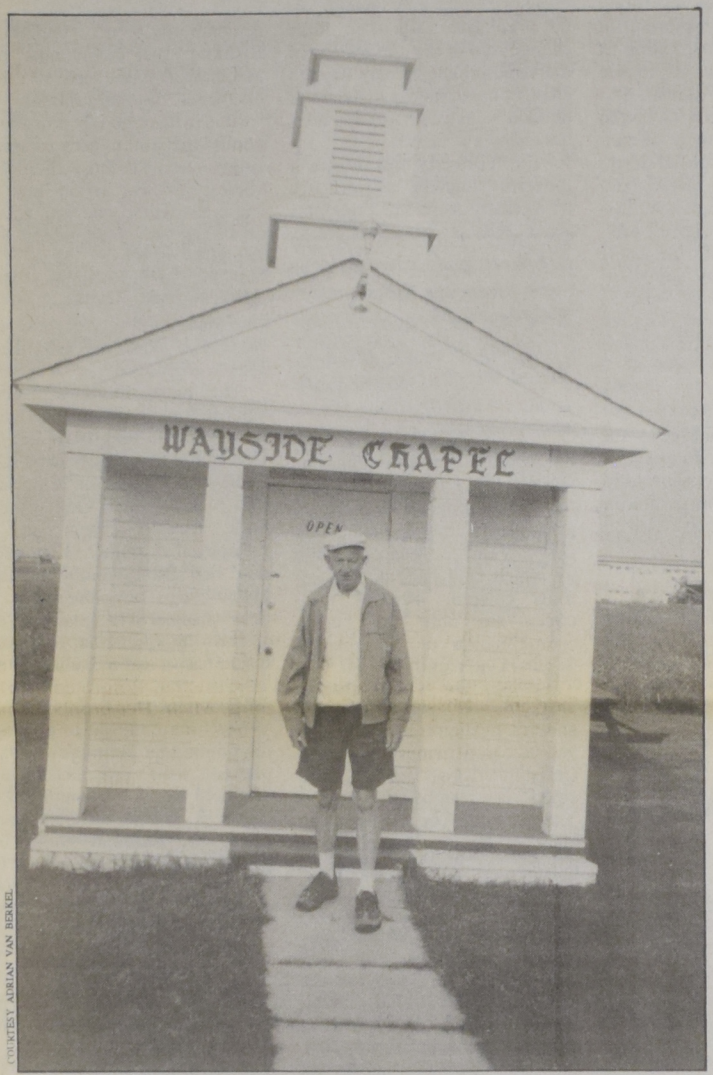
# Popular chapel, faithfully maintained




COURTESY ADRIAN VAN BERKEL

The August 7 issue of *Christian Courier* contains a write-up about wayside chapels. Your paper carried a similar article a few years ago, but then, as now, Brandon, Man., was not mentioned.

I wish to let you know that our chapel was built in 1967 as a centennial project and that the cost for the material was covered by the Laymen's League of Grand Rapids, Mich. The chapel stands on the property of an Esso service station and restaurant on a service road of the Trans Canada Highway, just west of highway 10.

People from all over the world have signed our guest book, leaving their addresses and comments, nearly all of them appreciative, on over 40 pages. The chapel closes October 20 and opens April 20.

Much literature is taken every year: the "Family Altar" devotional booklet, as well as "Our Daily Bread" and the "Radio Pulpit" from the Back to God Hour; tracts from the Faith, Prayer and Tract League and the Bible Society; and Gospels of John. Once or twice a year we get requests for permission to hold a wedding there.

July and August are the busiest months, and I go there once a week to clean up and add literature. The chapel is owned by the Brandon Christian Reformed Church, and has been in operation for 30 years. We also provide a framed church directory with addresses and times of church services of the Brandon Christian churches.

**Adrian Van Berkel**
**Brandon, Man.**

# *What is unusual about pastor's story?*

It's not often that I feel compelled to respond to a story that you have written in the *Christian Courier*, but the article on Peter and Jen VanderBeek (CC, Aug. 28) really bothered me.

In order to do justice to the situation, there is a fundamental part of the equation that is missing. And that is the income side. Unless that factor is also revealed, the arithmetic doesn't add up.

A lot of us have a $60,000 debt. Only we call it a mortgage.

A lot of us still pay tuition years after our kids graduate.

A lot of us don't go on vacations because we don't have the funds.

A lot of us do without a lot of things we want because of lack of money.

A lot of us get tired of struggling to make ends meet.

A lot of us have kids that grow up on rummage sale goods and second-hand clothes. But they are always dressed.

A lot of us shop at second hand furniture places to buy a bed for another expected child.

A lot of us learn to juggle things and accept those as challenges.

And a lot of us gratefully accept donations of cash or goods from friends and family and humbly learn to swallow our pride.

### We all make choices

A switch in lifestyle is often a personal choice. And there are always choices that need to be made. Peter and Jen's was a career choice, and with that they accumulated a debt as well as a vocation.

Right now they have a job that probably comes with the following: a house to live in, most likely with appliances and free maintenance; a car allowance; a book allowance; a pension plan and all the other perks that go with being in the ministry. And I would venture to say that their basic take-home pay, excluding the extras, is more than a lot of us receive gross.

Some of us have experienced a lifestyle change over which we had no control. We did not choose layoffs, unemployment, downsizing or underemployment. Here, too, choices have to be made, and the question of priorities raised. How can we be good stewards with what we have? The question of stewardship is there for everyone, but Peter will probably never have to face unemployment.

### Learning to be content

In regard to Peter and Jen declaring bankruptcy, one almost gets the idea that this loan has to be paid off in one year. The government gives students 10 years to pay off their debt — no different than a mortgage. Only the end result is different. One has a vocation paid for; the other a house. Again, a matter of choice.

So let's look at the positive. We have each other, our children, our health, fun, friends, family, church and whatever else we need. That word *need* is key. We may not have everything we want, but we have everything we need. The Lord has never yet let us down. He has always given us everything we need.

That's called providence. It's also learning to be content and thankful.

**Gerdie Adema**
**Georgetown, Ont.**

*(See more letters on pages 6 and 7.)*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Letter

# The Reformed tradition helps us avoid idolizing 'timelessness'

In his critique of "timeless principles" Henk Hart speaks of the need to leave behind Reformed tradition. Why the linkage?

Few of us who belong to that tradition regard it as timeless, nor does it aspire to timelessness. In fact, there's a strong argument to be made that the Reformed tradition has been suspicious of ascribing supertemporality to anything other than God.

*"By his stress on the continued unfolding of truth in the Spirit, Hart makes it difficult to distinguish the inspiration of St. Paul from the inspiration of St. Hart."*

The article implies that because we are in a "time of transition" we should leave tradition behind. I would have said that traditions are *more* important in a time of transition, because it is precisely when we are unsure of our direction that we need street signs.

### A deep continuity

Hart points to changes that have occurred in biblical ways within the scope of Scripture itself, especially from the Old Testament to the New. These have, as he knows, always been recognized by Reformed thinkers. We all know the distinction between moral, civil and ceremonial law which seeks to sort out what is abrogated from what still holds.

Although these distinctions are altogether too neat, Reformed thinking has been driven by the principle that it is the same God who relates to his people on the same basis.

Over against those who would divide the Bible into dispensations or contrast the God of the Old Testament with the one of the New Testament, the Reformed tradition has pointed to the deeper continuity behind the discontinuity.

By his stress on the continued unfolding of truth in the Spirit, however, Hart makes it difficult to distinguish the inspiration of St. Paul from the inspiration of St. Hart, or from the inspiration of St. Calvin or St. Aquinas. The discontinuity between O.T. and N.T. is displaced to a discontinuity between the era of Scripture and subsequent history, and from there it may again be displaced between the entire Christian tradition and the new beginning posited by any theologian or theological school. Every generation anew is called to write its own New Testament. How can Scripture serve as a standard here?

Here I am sure that I am not understanding Hart correctly, for to me he appears to be suggesting that God is not consistent in the way he relates to us and in the way he asks us to relate to him.

### Some things last

This is what I have always understood by principles: the grounds by which God binds us to himself and to one another in Christ. Our understanding of these principles may change and our cultural situation may change so that the *application* of the same principles may have to change, but certainly the content of God's love and justice does not change, does it?

Am I correctly understanding the term "timeless" as Hart uses it? Perhaps there are principles that perdure in and through time without being timeless? Or perhaps he no longer uses the word principle to refer to something (law? word? covenant? truth?) by which God upholds and unfolds creation. Perhaps principles are only the human approximation or formulation of what God requires of us?

*"If there is no law to show us where we fall short, how can we prophetically, on the basis of God's Word, say No! to our own culture?"*

Perhaps Hart is afraid that we have turned principles into another mediator between God and humanity alongside of Jesus Christ? Perhaps "timeless principles" can also be translated as "eternal truths" or "transcendant ideas" so that we can see Hart's polemic as directed against a Christian Platonism?

### 'Schoolmaster' to Christ

Both Lutherans and Calvinists speak of God's requirements or law as the schoolmaster to Christ. As a schoolmaster it must be a corrective and "over against" whatever notions or behavior we initiate. It cannot, therefore, be something of our own making but must come "from outside" us. It is addressed to us from God and seeks to redirect us. It provides a new beginning or starting point — in Christ. The word "principle" for this redirecting force strikes me as quite appropriate.

It may not be timeless but it does seem to set the conditions for how we structure our time.

### Successive generations need creativity, continuity

Hart, as I see it, wants to help us by providing concepts that do not close us up in ideas of our own making, for this would serve as a straitjacket for the next generation. We need concepts (a tradition?) that enable each successive generation to respond afresh and creatively to God's self-revelation. So discontinuity is important. Breaking the mold must not automatically be seen as disobedience or unfaithfulness.

But if there are no trans-temporal standards to turn us away from our own most cherished values, if there is no law to show us where we fall short, how can we prophetically, on the basis of God's Word, say No! to our own culture? He shows us how to break with Christian tradition but how do we break with the dominant, secular traditions?

The most telling argument against "timeless principles" for me is that if they exist and if God wants us to know them and if they are capable of being put into words, then God would have revealed them in a metaphysical primer. I suspect that our Bible comes in the hodge-podge of genres that it does precisely to goad us to creative interpretation, to ellicit our initiative and freedom.

### Baptismal promise

Yet I am reluctant to give up the notion that Scripture is jampacked with pronouncements that hold for us even across the centuries, across different cultures, and through shifts in paradigms or worldviews. It is true that God repeatedly strips us of all supports apart from himself, as in baptism, when the newborn is drowned and dies to her natural parents so that she emerges as a child of God under the care of parents who are now stand-ins for God.

But in the same baptismal ceremony the parents pledge to raise the child in accord with certain standards handed down from generation to generation. Discontinuity and continuity. Laypeople are prone to refer to the continuity as timeless. Nowadays in the academy, thinkers are rewarded for smashing illusions of timeless realities, but in so doing they sometimes forget their pastoral responsibility to the rest of the community.

I am glad that CC is providing space for Hart to further explain himself, for it is a question fraught with misunderstanding. And it is important to understand because Hart by no means stands alone among Christian intellectuals in rejecting timeless realities.

**Harry der Nederlanden**
**St. Catharines, Ont.**


# FROM COAST TO COAST

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Kentville-CKEN ..... 8:30am 1490
Middleton-CKAD ..... 8:30am 1350
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# *Old language won't do in turbulent time*

In my view, we live in a time of profound changes, of the magnitude of the Reformation, perhaps. Looking back almost 500 years, we now know that it was more than abuses in the Roman Catholic Church which forced profound changes in religious behaviors. Among other things: the invention of the printing press, the rise of cities, increased international trade and (therefore) contact with new cultures. And the beginnings of modern science and the rediscovery of classical learning demanded a shifting of religious emphases and new faith vocabularies.

The importance and turbulence of that Reformation period will find its analogy in our days, I believe scholars some 100 years from now will conclude.

### Profound challenges

The time is right, then, to value the interchange between two such competent and faithful scholars and believers as Hart and Wolters. No, they are not Luther and the Pope. Let's think in terms of Luther and Calvin; and Zwingli and Erasmus, with perhaps a bit of John Huss thrown in.

We are witnessing brothers-in-spirit-and-in-truth formulating and reformulating matters of faith and belief in "a world turned upside down." Just as during the Reformation all then-current matters of faith were re-examined (and not all of them discarded), so today's church is busy rethinking and re-feeling the shapes of its commitments.

For we, too, are faced with profound challenges. Racism, oppression of women, economic structures that divide the rich from the poor in resources and justice, euthanasia, homosexuality, bio-ethics, science and technology, postmodern thinking, the ever-present embarrassment of the Holocaust, and the massive exodus from organized church life — all these happenings simply will not let the church continue with old language and old feelings.

There is more than the church involved here. "Postmodernity" describes our time's revaluation of some 400 years of Western thought patterns, notably in religion, philosophy and science. The time is right, then, to let the Spirit lead us on to new roads of new thoughts and new feelings, to cause new readings to occur.

Even though it's clear to me that I walk closer to Hart, I also want to make it clear that I have a profound need to have Wolters walk within earshot. How blessed the CC tradition is to have two such leaders along!

Given this background, I want to urge CC readers to suspend taking sides, and CC editors to keep this kind of discussion alive for a while. For instance, I want to hear more about the nature of principles; about Wolters' distinction between *timeless* and *subordinate*, for instance, a distinction I have difficulty seeing in practice and theory.

I remember how much of what I was taught as principle in the days of my youth has proven to be no more than ethnic and time-bound behavior (Sunday restrictions; avoiding theatre attendance, cards, film, jazz; limits on friendships and even contacts; political and educational allegiances).

### Changing forms

Beyond these obvious examples, I and some of my peers who are finding time to read more widely in our retirement confirm from our experience: we need to meet fresh approaches to faith, Scripture, the nature of church and of a walk with God.

Some of that reading touches on (and questions) some pretty tough "Reformed principles," the ones we knew so well most of our church life. We share that our reading of Scripture has changed, as have our worship experiences and ideas.

For instance, *Belgic Confession* Articles 27-29 no longer speak to us in meaningful ways. [Those articles deal with what we confess about the holy catholic church, the obligations of church members and the marks of the true church.] The "principles" embodied there have faded away, and not only for us but for every Christian Reformed Church council I have ever known!

Even the "centrality of Jesus" is being discussed anew in many church circles: it's not the truth of it that is debated, but the forms of that truth, and Christians exhibit profound differences with respect to those forms.

I have one more problem, namely that every principle, whether "timeless" or "subordinate," requires human formulation. Simply quoting a Bible text won't do — the choice of that text to voice a principle is already a conclusion, however guided by the Spirit it may prove to be. And conclusions are always up for re-consideration.

But just as I need to hear more from Wolters on this, I also need to, hear more, much more, from Hart. For how and when can we be sure that we are being led by the Spirit? What are the marks of that leading? And what is the nature of being led: from where to where? What he and others suggest sounds exciting, but will it stand the judgments of Scripture and time?

Does what I see as a profound church cultural shift mark the end of "Reformed"? If it does (I doubt it, though its emphases and forms may change), does it matter? Israel's cultures before and after exile were profoundly different, and different again after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 72.

### 'Reformed' not uniform

"Reformed" in many places on the globe today has different hues and shapes, some different enough to make it difficult for members to freely enjoy each other's worship and other practices.

We come from a tradition that looks at issues in terms of right and wrong. I invite CC's readership, instead to come to value "other" for a while, to learn how to listen to "other," behold it and play with it. Both Wolters and Hart clearly wish that in their relationship with one another. I pray that we follow their splendid example.

**Adrian Peetoom**
**Waterloo, Ont.**

# Let's focus on the call to be disciples

The thought-provoking dialogue between Henk Hart and Al Wolters regarding "timeless principles" in "times of transition" and the guiding presence of the Spirit, as we confess Jesus as Lord and celebrate our new life in Christ in all our relationships, is timely. Especially in view of the enormous cultural challenges that we face today!

Our communal understanding and public proclamation of the Good News in daily word-and-deed ministries ought to reveal that we deeply believe that "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Indeed, all God's people are called to live and be guided by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25), to show that we are "a letter from Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God" (2 Cor. 3:3). Moreover, as 2 Cor. 5:11-21 makes clear: all who are in Christ are a new creation who have been given the message and ministry of reconciliation.

I experience God's gracious presence most days and try to respond in faith and hope to Jesus' challenging invitation to practice reconciliation: "justice, mercy, faithfulness and the love of God" (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42). The Spirit guides us in true ways of life that include confronting the ideologies and powers about which Fred Van Geest wrote in "You and me... and injustice in Nicaragua" and "Children of the dump" (Sept. 9).

I don't understand everything Hart and Wolters write. Perhaps they will soon clarify their views by addressing our Christian responsibility to help the millions of voiceless children and vulnerable families, desperate people who suffer so much because alien spirits and evil forces violate the love and wisdom of Jesus and his abiding gift of redemption and renewal.

Such clarification could contribute to a Christian cultural witness that is so urgently needed in the crises of our times public engagement that is appealing evidence of the liberating power of the Spirit at work throughout God's good creation.

I really hope that the biblical call to be faithful followers of Jesus will be the main focus of our continuing dialogue.

**Gerald Vandezande**
**Agincourt, Ont.**

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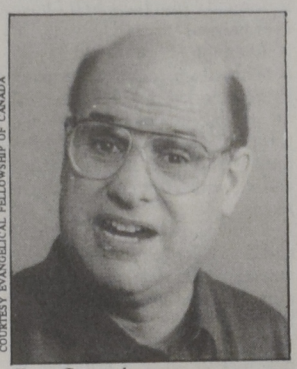
# Campolo to give weekly spiritual counsel to Clinton

WASHINGTON, D.C. (religiontoday.com)— Well-known evangelical speaker, teacher and writer Tony Campolo will become one of two spiritual counselors to U.S. President Clinton.

Campolo, 63, is also a professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. David's, Pa. The other counselor, Gordon MacDonald, is senior pastor of the non-denominational Grace Chapel in Lexington, Mass.

Campolo and MacDonald plan to meet with Clinton weekly to pray, study Scripture, and "do our best to help him as he searches his heart and soul," Campolo told the *Philadelphia Daily News*.

"...We want him to understand what went wrong with him personally that led him to the tragic sins that have so marred his life and the office of the presidency. We want to provide all the help that we can to spiritually strengthen him against yielding to the temptations that have conquered him in the past."



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*Tony Campolo*

Campolo and Gordon would not answer political questions from reporters. "Our responsibility and our desire is to rescue a fallen brother," Campolo, said in a statement. "I really feel I have a chance to get through.... He's become aware of things in his own life at a deep level. That has altered him significantly."

MacDonald himself admitted having an affair 12 years ago, left the ministry, wrote a book, and later returned to the pastorate. All three men are Baptists.

## *Man bears cross in every country*

(religiontoday.com) — Arthur Blessitt has achieved his goal of carrying a cross to every nation. Blessitt, 57, has carried a 12-foot cross through 277 countries, island groups, and territories since 1969, Ecumenical News International said. He completed the task on September 1 when he carried the cross to North Korea.

In his 30-year pilgrimage, Blessitt has walked 32,580 miles, faced a firing squad and has been arrested 24 times. He has traveled through 49 countries that were at war, and has walked with 70,000 people across Poland. Billy Graham has walked with him and Pope John Paul II welcomed him to Rome. Blessitt has been listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for the "world's longest walk."

## Hindu plan to revoke Catholic status thwarted by Indian Prime Minister

NEW DELHI, India (EP) — A plan by Delhi's Hindu government to revoke the status of Catholic churches as places of worship has been thwarted by Indian Prime Minister Atal Vajpayee (see CC July 31, page 8).

The state government introduced a plan July 3 to remove legal protection from churches on the pretext that wine was used at Mass in violation of liquor licensing laws. Vajpayee ordered the decision reversed, declaring, "My government respects the sentiments of the Christian community, and I assure them that we are opposed to any kind of restrictions being imposed on churches."

## *Revived 'Christian Family' movement an effective witness*

(religiontoday.com) — An organization of couples helping other couples is growing. The Christian Family Movement, which began among Catholics in 1949 and once numbered 150,000 couples in 52 countries, had shrunk to 1,132 families in 1982.

In the 1950s and 1960s, attention was placed on social issues such as racial justice, economic policies, poverty, and world peace, the *National Catholic Reporter* said. The current approach is directed at integrating Christian values into family and community life. About 2,000 Christian Family Movement groups exist in 125 parishes.

Typical of the group's activities is its relationship with an Illinois couple. Parishioners from a local CFM group introduced themselves to Bill and Teri Brandt, nominal Catholics who did not attend church, when they heard that Teri was pregnant with triplets. They brought meals, kept Teri company when she was confined to bed rest, and changed diapers after the babies were born. Today the Brandts are active parish members. "It changed our minds about what Christianity and church are all about," Bill Brandt said.

## *American gays protest Anglican Church head's presence*

GREENWICH, Conn. (religiontoday.com) — Homosexuals held a silent protest at an Episocopal Church service in Connecticut attended by Archbishop George Carey, Sept. 2. Carey, as Archbishop of Canterbury, is head of the Church of England and the worldwide Anglican Communion, which totals 70 million members. Carey is considered to be an evangelical Anglican and opposes the ordination of practicing homosexuals.

About 50 people wore pink triangles to a service at Christ Church in Greenwich, Conn., to protest the Anglican Communion's recent decision not to ordain homosexuals or perform homosexual marriages. Carey was vacationing in the United States with his wife at the time.


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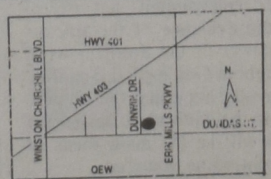


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## Beloved CRC worker passes

**CC Staff**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Dr. Harvey A. Smit died suddenly on Thursday evening, Sept. 17, after having been diagnosed with cancer in brain and lungs two months earlier.

Smit began his career as an army chaplain in 1957 and was missionary to Japan from 1959 to 1977. It was at that time that he suffered from cancer of the colon, but after surgery made a full recovery.

In 1977 Smit joined CRC Publications and became editor in chief (worship/education/evangelism) in 1980. He retired in 1987. Last year Smit had surgery for bladder cancer.

Smit's ministerial credentials remained in Eastern Avenue CRC. He and Dr. John Kromminga were acting editors of the *Banner* between the editorship of Galen Meyer and John Suk.

# Vietnamese church factions experience 'unparalled' unity

**Dan Wooding**

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam — During a recent fact-finding mission through Asia, an American Christian leader who is leading one of the world's largest prayer movements, returned from communist Vietnam with some surprising news about signs of unity there between "registered" and "unregistered" Christians, who previously would not talk to each other.

Steve Haas, president of Prayer for the Persecuted, which is organizing the November 15 International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, says that he witnessed an unparalleled show of Christian unity in Vietnam, as large numbers of government registered and unregistered house church leaders are meeting for prayer and fellowship.

"Normally there is animosity between those groups that have organized under government control and those who have chosen to assemble outside official sanction," stated Haas, following a series of meetings with Vietnamese leaders in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon).

Haas accompanied Tom White, president of The Voice of the Martyrs, on a three-country investigation of house church health and growth in Asia.

"Earlier this year, a large meeting was convened for the leaders of both groups with very positive results," Haas continued. "Follow-up meetings for prayer and reconciliation are currently taking place between the two in spite of strong opposition from the government against unsanctioned house church gatherings. All of the house church leaders we spoke with have been either regularly interrogated, imprisoned or both."

### Need leaders and prayer

In spite of the real threat of persecution, Vietnamese house church numbers continue to climb, said Haas. "One house church movement we surveyed was showing a monthly increase of 400 new converts each month," he said. "Through a burgeoning network of relationships, evangelistic programs and the work of itinerant evangelists, the unregistered church is growing rapidly."

The Vietnamese house church leaders shared that their greatest needs were for more leaders and prayer. "With the explosion of unregistered churches meeting in backrooms, warehouses and the open air, senior leaders are finding it difficult to keep up with the training and supervision necessary to mature young believers and guard against heresy," said Haas.

On the same trip, Haas and White also visited house churches in Laos and China.

# *Minority religions in Albania face uncertain future*

TIRANA, Albania (Compass) — Albania's latest efforts to prepare a new constitution and a law governing religious activity could severely affect minority religious communities, including many Protestant groups.

Vasil Kureta, an adviser to the prime minister's Cabinet, has been appointed to oversee religious matters. Kureta makes a clear distinction between "communities" and "sects," which could create problems for smaller religious groups.

"We do not want sects to thwart traditional religions," he said, "and I am personally opposed to their registration in courts because they can no longer be monitored and their membership cannot be checked any more."

Rajwantee Lakshman-Lepain, a French historian living in the capital, Tirana, told Compass, "It is obvious that the Albanian government is influenced by the majority religions of Islam, Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism, and is pushing [for] the registering of religions so as to exercise governmental control over religious activity and especially to eliminate 'undesirable' sects and cults."

# *Do you pray like you drive?*

## Chapter & Verse

● Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
Al Wolters

*"Come near to God and he will come near to you."* (James 4:8)

Our oldest daughter has begun driver's training and needs to spend 50 hours behind the wheel of our car, with either Brenda or myself riding next to her. She is supposed to be practicing the fine art of motoring, while we are mandated by the state of Michigan to teach her the best of our skills.

### A new perspective

I'm not used to sitting in the front passenger seat. I like to drive, and when we are in the car together as family my foot naturally searches for the accelerator. Now, however, from my new perch on the other side of the car, I can spend more time observing the driving habits of others.

Intersections with four-way stops prove especially interesting. Some drivers plow right through, hardly caressing the brake pedal. They know that they have right-of-way, whether the law gives it or not. One car I saw recently even sported this bumper sticker: "As a Matter of Fact, I Do Own the Road!" That driver knew that stop signs were posted in order to keep other people out of his way!

Some drivers are much more hesitant at those all-way stop intersections. They halt their vehicles far short of the stop signs, and then gradually play off the others who might have cars pointed in different directions. Stop! Start! Stop! Start! Stop! Roll forward! Stop! After a while no one is quite sure who should pass through next.

### Check it out

A few drivers are very legalistic. When they arrive at intersections at the same time with other vehicles, they assess, in inches, which car got there first. They will wave on that driver, even if others are beginning to make false starts. Not only that, but where two or more cars pulled up at the same time, these drivers live by the rule that the driver on the right goes first. They will not move until it is their turn.

Some (fortunately, not very many) seem to find driving a nuisance, or an opportunity to do the things they really prefer: talking, finding the right music on the radio, dressing, shaving, or changing cigarettes. A week ago I followed a woman who had mastered the art of styling her hair while driving. For two city block she managed to apply hairspray while driving with her knees!

Sometimes in my musing about drivers I consider matching their personalities with their motoring habits. Is the timid driver a low "D" on the DiSC scale, or an "I"ntrovert with Myers-Briggs? Does the legalist need to accomplish her DiSC "C"lerical skills in order to have her day begin and end perfectly? Are those who nose ahead into intersections merely acting on their high "D"ominance characteristics, or are they simply extreme "E"xtroverts, as Kiersey and Bates would have it?

### Trafficking in Prayer

Of course, with my pastoring and theological bent, I often wonder whether people pray like they drive. "Come near to God," says James. I can see one driver I know racing for heaven, scattering angels on the way to the throne. Another peeps sheepishly from around an ecclesiastical corner, wondering if this is really the place she ought to be. A third person I have traveled with marks his prayers, as his life, with logical precision and careful diction, giving God the time and date in the same manner he signals turns to others on earthly thoroughfares.

I think of my own driving, and my own approach to God. Sometimes I think I must make him just one more stop along the busy highway of life, hoping that the prayer ramps will be easy-off, easy-on while I rush through "doing my thing" with him.

It takes all kinds, I guess. What I am learning these days, however, is that it is always wonderful to hear the car come home, no matter how skilled, aggressive or hesitant the driver. That's why I always try to greet my daughter when she pulls in. After playing with life on the roads, it is good to see her.

I can imagine, as James says, that God is always happy when we come home to him as well, no matter how or where we drive our souls.

*Wayne Brouwer is senior pastor at Harderwyk Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Mich.*

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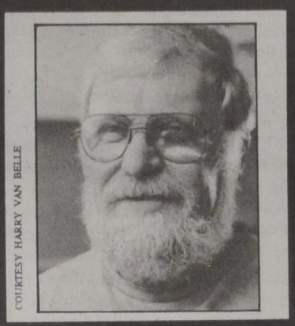
# Abuse attacks a person's self-worth

## Concerning the nature and consequences of abuse (1)

*In this issue, Dr. Harry Van Belle begins a series of three articles on abuse. They were prompted by his experience of skepticism in the Christian community about the seriousness of abuse.*



COURTESY HARRY VAN BELLE

**Harry Van Belle**

Sexual and physical abuse have been frequent topics of discussion in the media during the past several decades. As a result, people have become much more aware of the nature, the prevalence and the consequences of these forms of abuse. Less frequently we hear about emotional abuse, and lately there is talk of spiritual abuse as well. We don't know much about these latter forms of abuse. What we know we know from studies about sexual and physical abuse.

Abuse is essentially a violation of a person's life. It occurs with about the same frequency in every country, ethnic group, religion and socio-economic group. People in society have begun to realize that sexual and physical abuse during childhood can have pervasive and long-lasting negative consequences for the victims. Accordingly, these forms of abuse have been identified as criminal acts, and abusers in increasing numbers have had to pay for their deeds by doing jail time.

Not all media reportage shows an increased openness about the seriousness of abuse. Some media stories raise doubts about the frequency with which abuse happens. These also question whether the negative consequences of abuse are really as serious as they are generally described.

In Reformed Christian circles I meet with this skepticism about abuse far too often. For these reasons I am writing a series of three articles about the nature and the consequences of abuse; about ways in which abused people recover; and about things we as a society and a church community can do to help prevent abuse.

### All abuse is not the same

All acts of abuse are not the same. We have become most familiar with sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is a sexual act, or series of acts committed by an adult person on a child; or a sexual act or series of acts committed by one adult person on another adult person without the latter's consent.

**Abuse is essentially a violation of a person's life. It occurs with about the same frequency in every country, ethnic group, religion and socio-economic group.**

When sexual abuse is perpetrated on a child by a stranger we call it childhood sexual abuse (CSA). When sexual abuse is perpetrated on a child by a relative, a parent or a sibling we call it incest. And when one adult abuses another by performing non-consensual sex on that adult, we call it rape or sexual assault. Society recognizes the seriousness of sexual abuse by treating it as a criminal offense.

### Is spanking physical abuse?

Physical abuse is an act that inflicts bodily harm on another person. Though physical abuse is also considered a criminal offense, just when bodily contact between two individuals constitutes physical abuse is much more difficult to determine. Certainly, in our today's society, for an adult to beat a child would be considered a criminal act. But does spanking a child constitute physical abuse?

Many people in the Reformed Christian community don't think so. They can remember being spanked by one of their parents for misbehaving, without serious negatives for their lives. Some even argue that it did them a lot of good. At the same time, it is my repeated observation as a therapist that Reformed people as a group have a great deal of difficulty giving and receiving physical affection. Is there a connection? Perhaps the spankings they received did leave their negative consequences after all. The body usually does not lie.

One way of thinking about physical abuse is to think of it as an invasion of a person's body space. "Body space" is the physical distance we can tolerate between our body and that of another person. When a person invades our body space we have the uncomfortable feeling that this person is too close to us.

People differ in the amount of body space they need. I believe that children and young people today have a keen sense of their own body space. It may, therefore, be more abusive for them to be touched against their will than was the case a generation ago.

I am by nature a physically affectionate person. I like to hug people and I like to be hugged. But I have learned over the years that not everyone likes to be touched. Thus, I now wait to be invited before I make physical contact with another person.

Perhaps thinking about physical abuse should not be done so much to determine when physical contact becomes a criminal act as to acquire a heightened sense of respect for people's physical bodies and for their body space.

### Emotional abuse not always recognized

If it appears to be difficult to define precisely what constitutes physical abuse, it is even more difficult to describe emotional abuse. It is almost impossible to convince some people that there *is* such a thing as emotional abuse. This is so, not because it happens so rarely, but rather, because it is so common.

Parents do it to their children; teachers do it to their pupils. Marriage partners, friends, fellow workers and members of churches may all emotionally abuse one another at one time or another. Broadly defined, any act by one person that diminishes the self-esteem of another person can be considered emotional abuse.

Characteristic of this form of abuse is that it occurs for the most part unintentionally. People usually do not deliberately abuse others emotionally. It happens without thinking. That does not mean that it is, therefore, less damaging than the other forms of abuse.

All of us have had the experience of being made to feel like a complete failure by a remark spoken in anger, such as: "What's the matter with you? Can't you do *anything* right?" or "Is that what you really think? Surely, nobody can be *that* stupid!" or "You're such a klutz! Sometimes I wonder whether you will ever amount to anything."

When parents repeatedly say these, or other emotionally hurtful things, their children's sense of self-worth is damaged little by little. Saying emotionally hurtful things to your friends or your partner in marriage can make them feel terribly rejected. The words we speak in anger are not innocent; they wound and can even kill a person's dream, her sense of optimism or self-confidence. Particularly when these emotionally hurtful remarks are deliberate and ongo-

ARTIST: JENNIFER BEKENBOSCH

ing, they can represent a potent form of abuse.

### Using God to force compliance

One form of abuse we are least likely to identify is spiritual abuse. It occurs when a person attempts to cajole other people into believing something or doing something they would not believe or do of their own accord. It is the cajoling part of the act that is objectionable and constitutes abuse.

In Christian circles spiritual abuse happens when someone manipulatively throws the Book at another person. Parents, teachers and preachers/priests commit spiritual abuse when they use God to get their children, their pupils or their parishioners to do *their* will. In essence, spiritual abuse is a misuse of spiritual authority or power.

### When trauma occurs

All acts of abuse are not equally damaging of a person's life. There are gradations. The severity of abuse can be determined by the extent to which the recipient of an abusive act experiences it as a traumatic event.

We know, for example, that the experience of being sexually molested by an adult is a severely traumatic experience for a young child. The same goes for adults when they are the victims of rape or some extreme forms of physical abuse. In all these cases the criterion for the severity of the abuse lies in whether the victim of abuse experiences it as traumatic.

When we identify an abusive act as a trauma-inducing act, we naturally shift our attention from the nature of abuse to the negative consequences of being abused. Whenever a person is subjected to a traumatic event like being abused, that person typically reacts with a set of symptoms which clinicians have identified as a "post-traumatic stress reaction." The abused person tends to experience repeated flashbacks of the abuse in the form of nocturnal nightmares or frequent involuntary day-time emotional re-experiences of the trauma.

Another symptom is that she typically attempts to block the traumatic experience from her awareness and memory. Third, she develops a sense that she no longer has a future; and finally, she shows a marked tendency to withdraw from intimate relationships. What all this adds up to is a general depressed mood and much emotional pain.

These traumatic symptoms are most likely to occur in persons who are victims of prolonged periods of abuse. Abuse victims share these symptoms with people who have experienced other traumatic events, such as being involved in a natural disaster, being exposed to the violence of war, or being incarcerated in a concentration camp. The essence of all these events, and of being abused, is the experience of trauma.

### Abuse of trust

What gives abusers the power to induce such severe trauma in their victims? Here, I think, we come to the heart of what makes every act of abuse so damaging. Abuse is essentially the abuse of trust by a person in a position of trust. People in positions of trust — parents, teachers, pastors, mentors, counselors, medical doctors — are expected to be trustworthy by those who put their trust in them. Such authority figures are believed to be especially intent on promoting the welfare of those under their care. Abuse violates that trust.

The capacity to trust is an extremely important commodity in human life. Probably the first thing an infant who is raised in a loving family by nurturing parents learns is to trust that the world is a safe place to live in. This sense of basic trust includes a belief that the physical world is reliable, that people can generally be counted on to care for one another, and that one generally is capable of handling the problems one meets in one's life.

People who have been subjected to abuse, particularly when this abuse occurred when they were children and when they were subjected to prolonged periods of it, lose their capacity to trust. They no longer are able to experience the world as a safe place.

As a result they are perpetually on guard against a potentially unending series of traumatic events. Perhaps the most damaging things abusers do to their victims is to rob them of their sense of basic trust.

*Harry Van Belle is a therapist and teaches psychology at The King's University College in Edmonton, Alta.*

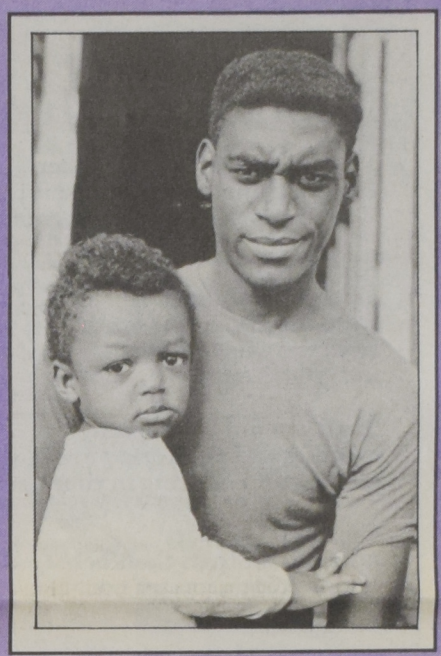
# Crossing the borders of our hearts

**John Krueger**

The Twelfth Street district is wedged between the Detroit River and Tiger Stadium. Just five miles from where I grew up in Windsor, Ont., this black ghetto might just as well have been in Mississippi. We were separated by that river where Houdini performed his underwater escape and by the ever-suspicious customs guards on both sides of the border. But in July 1967, nobody crossed that border. The riots broke out.

At that time Detroit was Murder Capital U.S.A., but the riots were something different. Even Gordon Lightfoot sang about those "black days in July." Detroit was a city under siege. The National Guard cordoned off the downtown area and no one dared enter the war zone. All we could do was stare from across the river at the black plumes of smoke curling up from buildings left burning. And we'd hear the snap of sniper fire.

Years after the riots, I peered across racial borders through books. I read about Rosa Parks and the Montgomery (Alabama) bus boycott; the student sit-ins at the Woolworth's segregated lunch counters; and how the Birmingham police stepped aside to let the Klan "welcome" the Freedom Riders to town. Of course I read about Martin Luther King, Jr. But I also stumbled across a lesser known King who fought for justice in those days — one who was white like me, but had a very different heart than mine.



NATIONAL FILM BOARD PHOTO

### A different kind of fire

Racial injustice disturbed Edwin King. After a tornado ripped through his home in Vicksburg, Mississippi, King climbed a hill and gazed down in the valley. Shanties inhabited by poor blacks had been left to burn because they weren't priority for the local white fire department. King was horrified. On that ridge he looked across a border — a Samaria — and something caught fire in his soul.

King studied for the ministry and assembled a group of racially mixed students and professors to visit one of Mississippi's most segregated white congregations. As they mounted the front steps, church deacons shot out their hands to bar entry. On another occasion the visitors pressed forward. They leaned over the locked arms of the church sentinels and banged on the heavy wooden doors. Inside, the congregation tried to take communion. Often the group simply knelt on the steps outside and prayed, until the cops arrived.

### Urban flight

Things have changed since Ed King's church campaigns. We've erected gold-lettered "All Are Welcome" signs outside our churches. Yet barriers still separate us from those who have different economic status, education and skin color. I once led seminary students on tours of urban Toronto. We were shocked at how many churches had been abandoned or converted into theatres, restaurants and even a Hare Krishna temple. This exodus is easy to explain. The church followed the people to the suburbs — those who could afford to move.

I understand this urge to leave the inner city. For years I endured the subway rumble under my apartment, grinding bus engines outside my window, and drunken shouts from the tavern down the street. Through a job change I found my own escape. Now I'm surrounded by a vast quilt-work of suburban lawns, parks and luxury homes — a geography which insulates me.

### Personal encounter

Recently, I've looked at what I left behind, examined my behavior and peered across the border which runs through my own heart. I couldn't retrace my steps, so I watched the news to get dispatches from the poverty line. The media gave me proximity without relationship. My TV screen zoomed in on a single mother with three children filling shopping bags at the Daily Bread food bank. But I didn't know them.

Jim Wallis of Sojourners says it's the crossover experience of touching the pain of someone different which gives birth to compassion in us. "It is not the book or the class, or the idea that changes us, as important as those things are... Invariably, it's an experience of crossing boundaries, touching someone else's reality and hearing others' stories that change people."

And so, too, it's only through relationships that poverty is made personal. A woman named Darlene taught me this. She has trouble walking and speaking because years ago on her way home from school a car struck her down.

When I listen carefully to her halting, drawn-out words my perspective changes. Sometimes on the margin of my spirit I sense that even our small talk and laughter is lifted into a greater story — one that has eternal meaning. I follow her expressive eyes and then fleetingly recognize that I'm crossing a border, that I'm speaking to the One who is thinly disguised in the least of these.

*John Krueger is the career and placement co-ordinator at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.*

Poems

# A rebuke to armed conflict

Poetry by Abou Camara

## Mourn not Mama Africa

Mourn not! old-aged Pelican.
Beat not your breast, ancient hen.
Why "cuc... koo... koo" morning, evening and night?

See!
Your chicks come!
from the north and south
from the east and west,
hurrying home.

Shall you not hear again
giggling and chattering under your wing,
singing and dancing in your nest?

Comfort! Comfort!
afflicted mother. Comfort,
Mama Africa, mourn not.

## *A Dirge*

*How the mighty lie naked,*
*how mighty Africa has fallen.*

*Under every spreading tree*
*in all her valleys*
*on all her lofty heights,*
*her bullet-drilled dead sprawl*
*her lone roam; thirsty and scared*
*her maimed wail.*

*How the mighty lie naked,*
*How mighty Africa has fallen.*

*Should you have*
*drunk so deeply from the cup of pain?*
*Why do you*
*stagger all the way, like a homeless midnight drunk?*

*You, town crier!*
*You who live by sending messages!*
*Tell it not to Hetzl,*
*let Romulus not hear of it*
*hide the records from the house of Windsor.*

*That mighty Africa lies naked.*
*That Mama Africa lies wallowing in her blood.*

WORLD BANK PHOTO

## No More Armed Conflicts

Shout for joy, you mountains of Africa,
Let the ha, ha, ha resound through your
green valleys.

Raise high your waves, you mighty waters.
Let all that abides in you join the celebration.

Sigh with relief, afflicted one,
Let you mmmm... hhhhh cease.

Behold!
The days of armed conflict are numbered.
Peace at last!

*Rev. Abou Camara lives in Gambia, West Africa. "These poems are aimed at rebuking armed conflict that affects present-day Africa," he writes.*

Book Review

# *Reappearance of McGuffey Readers turns back the clock*

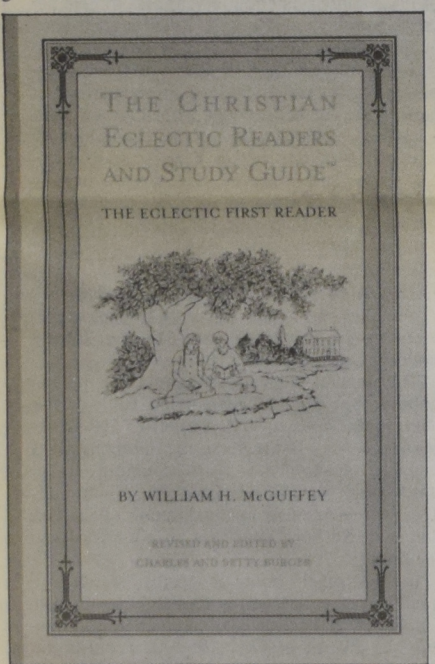
**Marian Van Til**

## The Christian Eclectic Readers and Study Guide

**By William H. McGuffey; revised and edited by Charles and Betty Burger.**

*Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, England: William B. Eerdmans, 1998. First published 1836. 5 vol., 1029 pp. ISBN 0-8028-4480-4. $50 (US).*

Most North American-born adults over 40 will have heard of the McGuffey readers, staples of education for more than a century, whose purpose was to develop not only fluent reading skills, but articulate speaking abilities — and, in the end, good, moral children.




The original readers used a wealth of biblical illusions and literature, most of which were excised from later editions as the 19th century waned and society became both more diverse and more secular. McGuffey, himself a clergyman, justified his early choices in his preface: "In a Christian country that man is to be pitied who at this day can honestly object to imbuing the minds of the youth with the language and spirit of the word of God."

### Re-picking old chestnut

Now, Charles and Betty Burger have introduced the McGuffey readers anew, aimed at Christian students and parent-teachers for home schooling purposes. Betty, as writer of the study guide, and Charles, as editor, call their effort *The Christian Eclectic Readers* because they have restored much of McGuffey's biblical content.

But being a Christian today is very different from what it was in the world of 1836. So why re-pick this old chestnut? Because, in the Burgers' view, it contains much more meat than many modern offerings do, and because it uniquely integrates faith and learning.

### Giving reason for our hope

In the introduction to the study guide (Volume 5), Betty Burger notes that "rhetoric skills have traditionally been considered a basic part of education." However, "As Christians ... we have an even more important reason to resurrect and dust off these skills (in ourselves and our children)," she asserts.

"The Christian faith is under fire in the West as it hasn't been for almost a millennium. Once again we are being called upon to 'give reason for the hope that lies within us.' To aid our children in this fight, we wish to teach them how to present themselves publicly and to give lucid arguments, whether they are talking to the neighbor over the back fence or the judge before whom they've been arraigned. If all they can say is, 'Da ... well ... um..' they will not make credible witnesses. We want us all to do better than that."

### Resurrecting old skills

Burger presents four arguments for going back to the McGuffey Readers: "First, these readers work! [They] were used for decades to produce a far more literate and articulate populace than our present one. Second, they are not 'dumbed down,' which almost all modern readers are. They build an extensive vocabulary. Third, they are a compact, relatively inexpensive set that ... provides ten years' worth of instruction and practice in reading and speaking. These are the skills we particularly address because they are at a remarkably low ebb. Fourth, the study guide provides a Christian framework for this instruction."

### Archaic forms

All of this reasoning sounds plausible, laudible, and even exciting. But when one peruses the readers themselves, doubts arise. The selections, though somewhat edited and toned down for modern children (because, says Betty Burger without irony, life is not as earthy now as it was then), still depict 18th and 19th century rural settings; they still assume the social and class structures of that time; they still present specific, strict roles and activities for boys and girls, men and women (which, presumably, the Burgers applaud); they still moralize a great deal, despite the Burgers assertion that they expunged the moralizing; nor has Charles Burger seen fit to edit the male-oriented language.

In some cases, too, the information presented is no longer valid. To cite one example: in a piece on whales and the killing of whales for oil, meat, hide, etc., the accompanying questions make it appear that not only are whales still routinely killed for these purposes, but they're killed with harpoons and ropes, a la Moby Dick.

On the plus side, in the later readers, students are introduced to the writings of various famous authors. But a good school literature program (especially of the kinds used in Christian schools which with I'm familiar) would do the same, and more comprehensively. Laudibly, students are introduced to poetry early, but, ironically, many of the poetic selections are second-rate 19th century verses not at all in line with the Burgers' intended standard of excellence.

While many of the readers' selections are quite interesting, and undoubtedly do serve the purpose intended in terms of language and rhetorical skill development, using them as the foundation of a child's reading and literature program seems to be too much an attempt to turn back the clock.

### No trace of modernity

Children are neither exposed to exceptional reading material nor are they being challenged to engage with *our* late 20th century world and its problems, here and now. There is another irony here, in that the Burgers stress preparing children to be able to give an account of themselves and their faith whether to a neighbor over a backyard fence or in a court of law while opposing abortion.

I don't think I would recommend these readers as a child's sole course in language and rhetorical skill development and introduction to literature. But if these new *Christian Eclectic Readers* are used in addition to other good literature, they serve an admirable purpose, both in skill development and in being a window onto a part of social history with which modern children should at some point become familiar.

# Young Canadian brings his Christian music to Reformed youth in the U.S.

**Marian Van Til**

WOODBRIDGE, Ont. — Singer/songwriter Darrin Berg, 26, of Woodbridge, Ont., is presenting concerts of his own music to young people in five Midwestern and Eastern states, as well as in Ontario this fall, courtesy of Youth Unlimited and Christian Schools International (CSI).

COURTESY DARRIN BERG

*Darrin Berg*

Youth Unlimited, formerly the Young Calvinist Federation, is the Christian Reformed Church's agency which ministers to the youth of the denomination. CSI is the now continent-wide and denominationally diverse association of Christian schools which were begun early in the century by Christian Reformed Church members.

### Will visit 50 schools

Berg presented a Youth Unlimited-sponsored September 18 concert at the Christian Reformed Church in Palos Heights, Illinois, and will present another on October 16 back in Ontario, at First CRC of London. Although he has performed at Cadet and Gems retreats (the Scout-like boys' and girls' clubs sponsored by the CRC), at "Youth Talks" gatherings and at the All-Ontario Youth Unlimited Convention, this is his first foray into the U.S. for Youth Unlimited.

In addition, Berg is doing an extended fall tour of 50 CSI schools in Ontario, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, New York and Pennsylvania. "The response so far has been great," he says. "Some of these schools I have already performed at previously, but most are new ground, which makes things very exciting."

Berg released a CD in 1996, containing mostly his own songs. In concert he sings and plays rhythm and lead guitar, accompanied by a backup band.

**For our Calendar of Events, please turn to page 19**

# *European Christians plan millennium march*

GREENWICH, England (religiontoday.com) — European Christians will march along the prime meridian to celebrate the new millennium. The 260-mile route follows the time line that passes through the Royal Observatory Greenwich, England, which will be the first part of the world to officially pass into the 21st century, Youth With a Mission news said.

(Despite the planned celebration worldwide, the popular notion that the new century and new millennium begin in 2000 is incorrect, say critics. The first century, after all, began in the year 1 and ended in the year 100, making years ending in zeros the *end*, not the beginning of each new century, and the years 1000 and 2000 the end of millennia.)

Millennium Way is being developed by a Christian group that wants to use the interest in the year 2000 to promote faith, justice and reconciliation of conflicts. It hopes to create a new national trail from the northeast coast of England — where the Greenwich meridian first touches land as it descends from the North Pole — to Peacehaven, on the south coast.

### Walking and talking faith

Schools and community groups along the way will be invited to support the project. One of its goals is to raise funds for African countries along the meridian, including Algeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo and Ghana.

A guide will lead walkers along the route and encourage them to discuss matters of faith. "We want to encourage people to make it something of a modern pilgrimage as they go, preparing themselves in body, mind, and spirit for the new millennium," YWAM's David Pott said. Citizens of France, Spain and the African nations will be invited to take part.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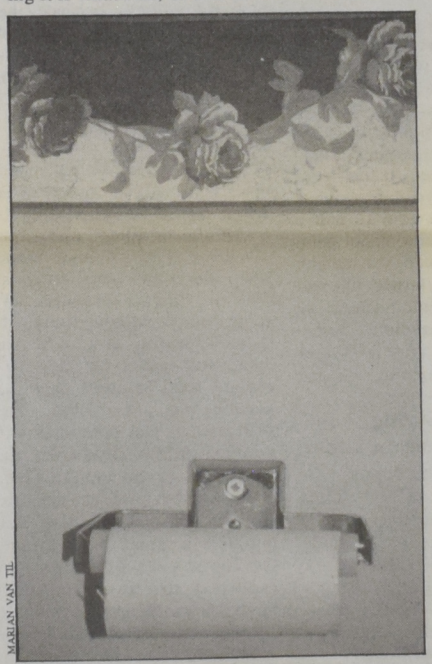
## Imajenings

# Called up yonder

The toilet paper roll is empty again.

A cardboard tube hangs there on the wall, forlorn indicator that the paper it contained has been all used up. The new roll, already depleted past a quarter of its abundant youth, is on the counter just in reach. So I change it. Pull off the old one. Put on the new one.

This is not the first time I am doing this job, and won't be the last. I toss the circle of useless cardboard into the garbage. Well, useless to me for now. If Janelle were here, it would be a craft item with all manner of potential. But to any of the others in this house, having long since exhausted the joy and usefulness of cardboard rolls, it would end up tossed. Changing it is what I do, so I do it.



MARIAN VAN TIL

It strikes me that I haven't been keeping count.

I don't remember the first time I changed a toilet paper roll. I don't remember where or in whose bathroom it was. I don't know what opened my eyes that first time to see the need.

Maybe my hands were wet and grubby from playing and, knowing how difficult it is to unroll fresh paper that way, I hung the new roll to satisfy my own childish preference and not as a service to the housekeeper there. Or maybe I was hiding out from something I wanted to avoid, and so tidying up the bathroom and rehanging the toilet paper was a way of keeping myself apart.

Maybe I wanted to assure ownership of the empty cardboard circles for projects and crafts of my own. And maybe I just saw a need and knew it was one I could handle more easily and more quickly than a thousand other needs that assail me, most of which take more time and more energy to satisfy.

Old one out. New one on. Done.

### Humble service

I know that I have changed toilet paper rolls in a wide variety of washrooms, mine and other people's, private homes and public places. In lots of different towns and cities and a few different countries. I have become a global toilet-paper-roll changer. I don't tell many people. Seems hardly worth being noted for.

By now I have done a few. More than 10. More than a hundred. More than a thousand, even. I wouldn't be surprised if that figure is creeping towards another zero. If every empty toilet paper roll I have ever changed were stacked in a room, Janelle would need a crew of one hundred other eight year olds to help her craft them all up in a year. But I haven't been keeping count.

So, there will be a day, one of these days, when I will change my ten thousandth toilet paper roll. The ceiling won't open up and spill a hundred balloons down on me. No announcer will call everyone within hearing to applaud. No bells and whistles. No prizes or big rewards. No trophies or speeches to mark the occasion. It will be like every other. Old one out. New one on. Done.

### 'They also serve who stand and wait'

It strikes me again: Many of the small services we do, day to day, are like that. Hardly noticed. Quickly done.

The funeral home was busy. Two people gone within days of each other. Both of the main rooms housed flowered coffins and grieving loved ones. In one room the family huddled together against the death looming there, proclaiming the end, a finished life, all used up. Their circle seemed sad and small, silent and defeated. No hope. Not many came to console the living.

In the other room a steady stream of hundreds of people sifted past the tear-stained family. Even though death was in this room, too, the noises of life crowded it out so it stayed bound in the coffin where lifeless bones and flesh tried to hide it.

The flow of people coming through hardly slowed. With handshakes and hugs, laughter and tears the people touched by the man who died so suddenly touched those left behind — giving hope and comfort and a taste of eternal reunions to come. Death defeated.

So many quick and quiet services he performed hardly seemed noticed.(You've already guessed that this man modeled his servant heart after that of Christ, his Lord.)

Yet it was like all the empty rolls coming back to proclaim it.

And though I know many came, I didn't keep count.

*Jen Vander Beek lives in Forest, Ont.*

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE

# Paradise lost

I was angry after gathering the material for and writing a column in February 1997 on the effect of the petrochemical industry on agriculture in Alberta. The death and illness of plants, animals and human beings, because of widespread pollution from oil and gas installations, is nothing short of criminal. Statistics and experience implicated both industry and the provincial government. The government was willing to let the petrochemical industry get away with what is essentially murder.

Nothing seems to have changed in the interim, except perhaps that the surviving victims have become more desperate. Wiebo Ludwig, his son and another friend from their farm near Hythe were charged in August with bombing an oil well site near Hinton. They have recently been released from police custody because of lack of evidence against them (see reports in last week's CC).

Fourteen years ago Mr. Ludwig and family and friends moved to their 300-acre Trickle Creek Farm northwest of Grande Prairie in the Peace River country, Alberta's last farming frontier. Their hope was to practice good stewardship of the land and be largely self-sufficient. It was not easy, but after four years on the farm they felt they had reached the point of being able to live out the biblical dictum "Owe no one anything but the debt of love." Then the oil and sour gas wells were drilled around them until there were 13.

## Birth defects

As of today the Ludwig family is near exhaustion after a long wrangle with a petroleum company which has been spewing raw and flared gas over their farm. Because of their very public battle they were the prime suspects in the most recent of 160 incidents where installations and facilities in the Peace country have been bombed or shot.

Mamie Ludwig, Wiebo's wife, in a letter to the *Edmonton Journal*, Aug. 31, 1998, linked directly the grievous loss of grandchildren to "exposure of their mothers to huge volumes of raw and flared solution gas" during pregnancy. They were born dead, "mushy like the lambs that have been repeatedly miscarried here from similar exposure," she wrote.

Mr. Ludwig recounts an experience of one of his daughters, burnt by toxins. There is something called the "spring flush" which is when the snow all melts, leaving behind the air pollutants collected with the snow over winter. There they remain until rains dilutes them. Just after the spring flush Wiebo's daughter leaned her arm on the top rail of a fence while tying up a cow. In half a minute she cried out in pain. Where her arm had been resting on the railing it turned red and eventually blistered. The local health authority would not get involved.

## Fired for the truth

The Ludwigs do have sympathizers, most of whom experience some degree of devastation on health and property from living downwind from sour gas emissions. Gradually such people are getting together in groups around the province to compare notes and gather strength. One of these people is Henry Pirker, who lives on the other side of Grande Prairie from the Ludwigs.

Mr. Pirker, being a producer of both honey and cattle, depends heavily on legumes. The grey, sandy soils on Pirker's farm are particularly suited to growing legumes such as alfalfa, but since the advent of sour gas wells in his area, hay crops have been dismal. Henry says that a government district agriculturalist originally from Ontario was fired after he confirmed that symptoms observed on crops on the Pirker farm matched those of bean crops suffering from urban smog in Ontario.

Pirker has done extensive research into why his legumes no longer thrive. Mainly, the problem is that there are few, if any, modules developing on the roots, which are normally there to harbor nitrogen-fixing bacteria which nourish the plant.

## Legumes and trees pay high price

Alfalfa in place for a few years can develop roots 30 feet deep, making them drought-resistant. Afflicted plants have roots only about nine inches deep, and without heavy doses of nitrogen fertilizer and water, yields are abysmal — as much as 85 per cent below normal.

Mr. Pirker has done extensive research into why his legumes no longer thrive. The problems are both shallow roots and absence of the root nodules containing the nitrogen-fixing bacteria which nourish legumes. With some help, Mr. Pirker has tested legume growth in 27 fields in a grid 8,000 square kilometre and consistently found no nodulation.

One noticeable exception to the lack of nodulation is known as the "edge effect." Pirker describes that as the impact of filtering of pollution by trees on the edge of a field, resulting in nodulation some 30 metres out from their side of a stand of trees.

The trees, however, pay a price. Mr. Pirker has weakened trees constantly falling over his fences, into his fields. Apparently Forestry Canada has identified a heavy tree die-off east of Lloydminister, where there is a concentration of sour gas. Official causes given for the die-off are caterpillars and drought, but Henry has examined legumes in the area and found no nodulation.

Southeast of Mr. Pirker, near Valleyview, a native band set up a thriving chopstick plant, exporting to the Orient the pure white Aspen product demanded. Then the trees began to rot, break off, and produce mottled wood. The plant was closed.

Falher, northeast of Mr. Pirker, has been known as the honey capital of Canada, but no more. The bee population no longer has access to thriving legume crops.

Farmers who think they are not affected by pollution do nothing to help their neighbors. Others publicly disassociate themselves from people who speak up about problems. Forty landowners in the Ludwigs' area recently made a joint statement to say they experienced no problems of the nature of that of the Ludwigs, and, indeed, welcome oil and gas activity.

Meanwhile, as recently as April, the pollution monitor at the nearby Beaverlodge Experimental Station has often registered toxin levels above the highest acceptable level for vegetation.

## Here today, gone tomorrow

It is ironic that the government of Alberta has given the petrochemical industry so much freedom to pollute that we now see startling evidence of the impending demise of both forestry and agriculture. Lumber and food production could have sustained us indefinitely, but oil and gas will soon be gone. And then what?

What have *we* done to help? We Christians should remind ourselves that not only does God show utmost concern for the suffering of the poor and needy, and anger with oppressors, but that he also expects *us* to champion of the cause of the oppressed.

*Vern Gleddie owns and operates a sheep ranch outside Edmonton, Alta.*

Voortman

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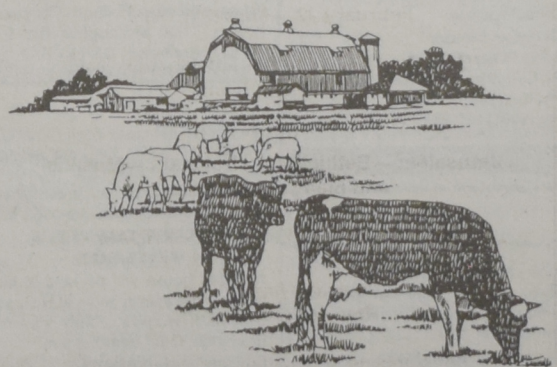

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# Classifieds

## Classified Rates

**(Revised February 1, 1995)**

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| Births | $25.00 |
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| Anniversaries | $45.00 |
| 2-column anniversaries | $90.00 |
| Obituaries | $45.00 |
| Notes of thanks | $35.00 |
| Birthdays | $40.00 |

All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

**Note:** All rates shown above are GST inclusive

**ATTENTION!**

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.,

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

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We offer a one-year subscription for only $25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $25.00 and the couple's correct address.

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**4-261 Martindale Rd.**
**St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**
**Phone: (905) 682-8311**
**Fax: (905) 682-8313**

E-mail: ccadverts@aol.com

## Births

**VOS - MOLENAAR:**

Andy and Nel Molenaar gratefully announce the arrival of their seventh grandchild

**JUNE VOS**

born Sept. 11, 1998.

A beautiful, healthy daughter for Paul and Ingrid Vos of Smithville, Ont., another grandchild for George and Frances Vos of Smithville, Ont., and great-grandchild for Mrs. J. van Duyvenvoorde of Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont.

Address: Andy and Nel Molenaar 9093 Wright Street, Langley, BC V1M 3T3

## Thank You

**DEZOETE:**

We wish to thank our family and friends for their best wishes we received on our 50th wedding anniversary. We thank God for his blessings.

Henk and Willemina DeZoete.

## Birthdays

**SMIT:**

*Congratulations to Mrs. Bertha Smit (Oma Smit) on her 90th birthday!*

On Saturday, Sept. 26, 1998, the Lord willing, our mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother

**BERTHA SMIT**
**(nee KNOL)**

hopes to celebrate her 90th birthday. We thank God for all these years given to her and pray that he will bless Oma, and continue to keep her in his care.

An open house will be held on Oct. 3, 1998, at Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont., from 2-4 p.m.

Best wishes only!

Home address: Holland Christian Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., CT 811, Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7

**WESTERMAN:**

On Oct. 10, 1998, the Lord willing, we hope to celebrate the 90th birthday of our father, grandfather and great-grandfather

**STEFANUS GERHARDUS WESTERMAN**

An open house will be held in his honor in the activity room at Holland Christian Homes, Faith Manor, Brampton, Ont., from 2-4 p.m.

Address: S.G. Westerman, Holland Christian Homes, Faith Manor, Rm. 140, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7

## Anniversaries

New Liskeard Mt. Brydges
Ont. Ont.
1958 October 4 1998

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

We are thankful to the Lord for his faithfulness to our dad and mom, Opa and Oma

**KLAAS and HAMMIE HOLMAN**
**(BURGLER)**

40 years of marriage is truly a gift from God.

Love from your children and grandchildren:

Fred & Angie Holman — Wardsville, Ont.
Crystal, April, Heather
Anita & Arnold Verhulp — Abbotsford, B.C.
Rachel, Abby
Lois & Henry Griffioen — Port Perry, Ont.
Marcia, Cynthia, Corrina, Kurtis, Janna
Walter & Jennifer Holman — Mt. Brydges, Ont.
Angie & Greg Skrobar — London, Ont.

Our prayer is that the Lord will bless you with many more years of love together. An open house will be held in their honor on Oct. 3, 1998, at the Mt. Brydges Chr. Ref. Church, 232 Adelaide St. N., Mt. Brydges, Ont., from 2 - 4 p.m.

Mailing address: 22443 Adelaide St., P.O. Box 518, Mt. Brydges, ON N0L 1W0

*Congratulations to Klaas and Hammie Holman on the occasion of their 40th anniversary!*

## Anniversaries

Trenton Welland
1958 October 10 1998

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you" (Ps.32:8).

With praise and thanks to God for His love and protection shown in the marriage of our parents, we invite you to celebrate with us in the 40th wedding anniversary of

**FRANCIS and MARY DE VRIES**
**(nee ZWART)**

From your children, with love:

Tricia & John Lammers
Justin, Mark
Wilma & Andy Veldman
Andrew, Melodie, Carla, Peter
Teresa & Bert Wikkerink
Lydia, Anthony, Nathaniel
Debbie & Ken DeVries
Esther, Hannah

We thank you, Dad and Mom, for your unswerving Christian example in all of our lives.

An open house will be held at Grace Chr. Ref. Church, 660 South Pelham Rd., Welland, Ont., on Oct. 10, 1998, from 2 - 4 p.m. Best wishes only, please.

Home address: 409 Kleiner St., R.R. #3, Wainfleet, ON L0S 1V0

## Anniversaries

1958 October 17 1998

"The Lord is good and His love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (Ps. 100:5).

With joy and thankfulness to the Lord we announce the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents

**JACK and LENIE GEHRELS**

We are grateful for the years of blessing that they have experienced and pray for God's continued guidance and grace.

Ken & Sharon Gehrels — Nepean, Ont.
Jason, Kevin, Alisa, Kellina
Jim & Gioia Gehrels — Thunder Bay, Ont.
Ben, Hannah
Corrine & Bill Webster — Parry Sound, Ont.
Michael
Angela & Karl DeVries — Whitby, Ont.
Daniel, Amanda, Kristin
Betty-Ann & Evan Reid — Bolton, Ont.
Emma

Open house on Friday, Oct. 16, 1998, from 7 - 9 p.m., in the Willowdale Chr. Ref. Church, 70 Hilda Avenue, Willowdale, Ont.

Best wishes only.

Home address: 8 Norwin St., Willowdale, ON M2M 1W9

## Anniversaries

Stouffville, Ont.
1958 September 1998

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

With gratitude to God for His faithfulness and mercy, we wish to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

**GERRIT and SANDRA SMIT**
**(nee DYKSTRA)**

Ron & Laurie Smit — Stouffville, Ont.
Peter, Gregory, Connie
Linda & John Zwaagstra — Smithville, Ont.
Ryan, Alyssa
Charlene & Jake den Hollander — St. Ann's, Ont.
Jason, Sheana, Tyson, Terra-Lee
Rosalie & Robert Brinkert — St. Ann's, Ont.
Sarah, Stephanie, Robyn, Collin
Carolene & John Ryzebol — Mt. Albert, Ont.
Kirstyn, Tricia
Irene & Craig Somers — Goodwood, Ont.
Joshua, Jessica

Home address: 265 Second St., Stouffville, ON L4A 1C5

There will be No Issue
**on October 2.**

# Classifieds

## Anniversaries

Wildervank Burlington
the Neth. Ont.
1938 October 4 1998
"For this God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even to the end" (Ps.48:14).
With joy and thanksgiving we hope to celebrate our parents' 60th wedding anniversary.

**PETER and CATHERINE SLAGTER (SCHUT)**

Congratulations and love from your family.
John & Debbie — Burlington, Ont.
Joe & Shirley — Waterdown, Ont.
Jerry & Alida — Markham, Ont.
Albert — Waterdown, Ont.
Ria — Dundas, Ont.
17 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.
Home address: 20 Northshore Blvd. W., Apt. 202, Burlington, ON L7T 1A1

*Congratulations to Peter and Catherine Slagter on their 60th wedding anniversary!*

## Anniversaries

1973 October 6 1998
"In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths" (Prov. 3:6).
With thanksgiving to God we are pleased to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents

**SIEBERT and INA VANHOUTEN (nee LUNSHOF)**

We also celebrate the 25th anniversary of Dad's ordination and installation into the ministry on Sept. 21, 1973.
We are thankful for your years of love and support and pray that God will continue to bless you.
With much love,
Christopher
Michael.
An open house will be held at their home, D.V., on Saturday, Oct. 10, 1998, from 2 - 4 p.m.
Home address: 681 Carluke Rd. W., Ancaster, ON L9G 3L1

## Obituaries

On Aug. 28, 1998, our Lord suddenly called home

**SJERP YSSELSTEIN**

in his 78th year.
"Because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19b).
Beloved husband of Margaretha Ysselstein - vanderWerff.
Dear father and Pake of:
Nienke & Gustavo Izurieta
Nienke, Natalia
Peter & Geraldine Ysselstein
Geraldine, Margaretha, Johanna
John & Helen Ysselstein
Sjerp, John, Marc, Daniel, David
Sjerp & Nataly Ysselstein
Darren, Lee, Joel

## Obituaries

Marknesse, the Neth., Sept. 6, 1998
"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).
After a long and good life the Lord took to Himself our dear and caring mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother

**CORNELIA DEN ENGELSE-VAN DIS**

widow of Cornelis Jacobus Den Engelse since Dec. 7, 1981.
She was 93 years old.
Anny De Vries - Den Engelse & Jelle De Vries (deceased) — Shallow Lake, Ont.
Dirk Den Engelse (deceased) & Rie Den Engelse - Van Den Brink — Marknesse, the Neth.
Kety Groenenberg - Den Engelse & Henk Groenenberg — Fredericton Junction, N.B.
Els Kuntz - Den Engelse & Hank Kuntz — Etobicoke, Ont.
Lenie Gehrels - Den Engelse & Jacob Gehrels — Willowdale, Ont.
Tonny Van Eekelen - Den Engelse & Lambrecht Van Eekelen — Breukelen, the Neth.
Bets Oostendorp - Den Engelse & Wim Oostendorp — Barendrecht, the Neth.
Grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.
A service of prayer, worship and thanksgiving was held prior to interment in Marknesse, the Neth., on Friday, Sept. 11, 1998.
Correspondence address: Mrs. A.L. Van Eekelen - Den Engelse, G. Van Nijenrodestraat 52, 3621 GL Breukelen, the Netherlands.

## Obituaries

1940 - 1998
"The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express" (Rom. 8:26).
Our Lord suddenly took home our husband, father, grandfather, son, brother, and uncle

**DIRK (DICK) VAN ROOYEN Jr.**

on Aug. 27, 1998, in his 58th year.
Beloved husband of Elizabeth Van Rooyen (Bouma).
Dear father of:
Beverly & Richard Wallace — Bright's Grove
Richard & Barbara Van Rooyen — Woodstock
Jason & Maria Van Rooyen — Oakville
Loving grandfather (papa) to Ryan, Brianne, Cassandra, Miranda and Brent.
Survived by his father Dirk Sr. Van Rooyen of Chatham and predeceased by his mother Martha, brother Wiegert, sister Aletta and sister-in-law Hielkje.
Dear brother of:
Hank & Gonnie Van Rooyen
Dina & Simon Dreise
Martin & Grace Van Rooyen
Adrian & Margaret Van Rooyen
Alice & Bert Schrieber
Martha & Albert Luth
Bill & Margaret Van Rooyen
Bert & Tinie Van Rooyen
Francis & Connie Van Rooyen
Father-in-law John Bouma, (predeceased by his wife Baukje), brother-in-law Dirk and Sylvia Bouma, and Andrew and Jennifer Bouma. Also survived by many nieces and nephews.
Correspondence address: R.R. 1, Forest, ON N0N 1J0

## Job Opportunities


# DORDT COLLEGE

**Faculty Positions**

Dordt College is seeking Christian academicians for openings beginning August 1999 in the following areas:

**Art**

**Business Administration: two positions**

**Computer Science and Mathematics: potential two-year position**

**Director of Graduate Education**

**Economics**

**Education: potential two-year position**

**Health, Physical Education, and Recreation**

**Philosophy**

**Spanish**

**Theatre Arts: Potential one-year position**

Evaluation of applications will begin December 1 and continue until the positions are filled. To learn more about the position and receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest that provides evidence of that commitment and a curriculum vitae to Dr. Rockne McCarthy, Dordt College, 498 4th Ave. NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250; facsimile: 712-722-4496; e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu

*Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution that encourages the nominations and candidacies of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.*

**DORDT COLLEGE**
**498 4TH Avenue NE Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697**



# CALVIN College

## Vice-President for Student Life

Calvin College seeks applicants for the office of Vice-President for Student Life. The Vice-President is the leader and chief administrative officer of the Student Life Division. She/he reports to the President and is responsible for the effective functioning of the Student Life division. The Vice-President is responsible for the planning, execution, co-ordination, and evaluation of the goals, programs, policies and staff members of the Student Life Division.

The candidate must embrace the Reformed tradition of the Christian faith, energetically support the mission of Calvin College, and articulate a coherent vision for Christian student development. The successful candidate will: hold a Masters' degree in an appropriate area (doctorate preferred), have expertise in student services and student development, demonstrate a commitment to developing a multi cultural community, have experience working with ethnic minorities, and possess proven management and leadership skills.

Candidates should submit a resume by **Nov. 15, 1998**, including the names and telephone numbers of three references to: **Connie Bellows, Director of Human Resources, 3201 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546**

# Classifieds

## Church News

**Christian Reformed Church**

**Call extended:**
— to First CRC, Guelph, Ont., **Rev. Henry Jonker** of First CRC, Victoria, B.C.
**Call declined:**
— to CRC, Dresden, Ont., **Candidate John Douma**.
**New secretary:**
— New secretary of the deacons, CRC, Fruitland, Ont., is **Rick Koornneef**, 1326 Hwy. #8, Stoney Creek, ON L8E 5K5. Phone: (905) 643-4479.

## For Rent

**For Rent: Large 4-bedroom exec. ranch home** situated in quiet country setting. Ideal for professional family. No lease required. 7 min. from downtown **Hamilton, Ont**. For more info. please call Redeemer College **(905) 648-2131, ext. 290.**

## Job Opportunities

I would like an **energetic person to work in meat processing plant in the Cambridge area.** Must be able to do lifting e.g. to work in shipping and packaging department, along with other duties.
**Call (519) 621-6829**

## Teachers

**BARRIE, Ont.: Timothy Chr. School** invites applications for a **Grade 6** maternity leave from January to June of 1999. Timothy currently serves 128 families with a school population of 229 students. Teachers must be able to enthusiastically articulate their faith. Preference will be given to applicants with training and experience with special needs students. Please direct resumes to:
**Mrs. Jane Tjeerdsma**
**c/o Timothy Chr. School**
**49 Ferris Lane, Barrie, ON**
**L4M 2Y1**
**E-mail: tcs@barint.on.ca**

## Miscellaneous

**For Sale:**
**Senior Oriented (55+)**
**Condo Apartment.**
Adjacent to Chr. Ref. Church, **Chilliwack, B.C.** 1235 sq. ft., 2 bedroom (large master), 2 full baths, Valor gas fireplace, airconditioned living/dining room, 5 appliances included, covered parking, amenity room. Asking $89,900. Immaculate condition!! Call **Bill Driesen, Homelife Glenayre Realty, Bus.Ph.: (604) 795-2955 or Fax: (604) 795-2770. Vancouver Toll Free: 856-8185.**

## Job Opportunities

### DORDT COLLEGE

**Vice President for Business Affairs**

Dordt College invites applications and nominations for the position of Vice President for Business Affairs. Serving on the president's cabinet, the VPBA provides leadership for all financial and business affairs of the college. Areas of oversight include financial accounting and reporting, contract management, budgeting, human resources, physical plant maintenance and construction, purchasing, risk management, and investments.

Candidates should have significant experience in fiscal systems and operations management in higher education or a similar setting and should have a minimum of five years of successful leadership of business, financial, and administrative functions. Effective communication and interpersonal skills are necessary, along with knowledge in the use of management information systems. A graduate degree in an appropriate field is preferred.

Enthusiastic Christians with a commitment to the Reformed faith and the desire to help lead a dynamic and growing institution are invited to send a letter of application and resume to the office of the president at the address below. Review of applications will begin November 1, 1998, and continue until the position is filled.

*Dordt College is an equal opportunity employer and encourages application by women, minorities, and disabled persons.*

**DORDT COLLEGE**
**498 4TH Avenue NE * Sioux Center, IA 51250 * 712-722-6000**

### CALVIN College

**Faculty Positions**

The Calvin College Education Department seeks candidates for a tenure-track position (subject to approval) which primarily involves teaching Educational Psychology and Introduction to Teaching from a middle school perspective and elementary and middle school Social Studies Curriculum and Methods.

Qualifications include: 1) an earned doctorate (or ABD) in educational psychology and/or curriculum and introduction; 2) K - 12 teaching and/or administration experience; 3) a scholarship agenda; and 4) commitment to a Reformed Christian expression of faith.

Calvin College is a Christian college within the Reformed tradition of historic Christianity and is an equal opportunity employer. The college encourages the application of women and minority candidates. Interested applicants should forward a letter stating qualifications and curriculum vitae to:
**Dr. L. Stegink, Department Chair, Education Department, Calvin College, 3201 Burton, S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49546, by Nov. 1, 1998, or until the position is filled.**

### *Vice President Credit*

for a **mid-size financial institution** in **Toronto**, with full responsibility for the credit function, specializing in real estate and commercial lending.
You will have post-secondary education, several years of credit management experience in a banking environment and a desire to succeed. We offer a vibrant, entrepreneurial, hands-on environment, where you will be involved with the senior management team to bring the organization into the next millennium, in an ever increasing competitive but vibrant market.
Please fax your resume in confidence to: **(416) 223-5339.**

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**#12 923 2nd Ave. S.**
**Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7**

**Single female looking for tall single male**, 35-40. Fun-loving, loves the outdoors, social and quiet evenings and loves to travel. In greater Toronto-area. Please send letters to **File #2684, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Interested in placing an ad. Please call us for details.
**(905) 682-8311**

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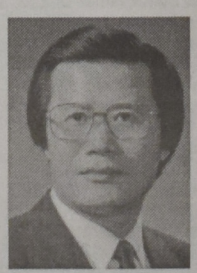
### Calvin Theological Seminary Missions Institute Lectures presents Dr. John H. H. Oak



**Dr. Oak** is the founding and senior pastor of the SaRang Community Church in Seoul, Korea. The congregation is the largest in the Hop Dong Presbyterian Church, with membership in excess of 15,000 and a ministry staff of over thirty.

Dr. Oak's successful ministry method of motivating, equipping, and mobilizing the members of his congregation has been the subject of highly regarded seminars held annually in Seoul and Los Angeles.

The speaker is a graduate of Chong Shin College and Seminary, Calvin Theological Seminary (Th.M.), and Westminster Seminary (D.Min.).

**"Sold Out to Equipping the Laity"**

**Thursday, October 8, 10:00 A.M.**
The Problem: Slumbering Laity

**Thursday, October 8, 2:00 P.M.**
Philosophy of Ministry: A Study on the Church

**Friday, October 9, 10:00 A.M.**
Strategy of Ministry: Discipleship

**Friday, October 9, 2:00 P.M.**
Method of Ministry: Discipleship Training

All presentations will be in the seminary auditorium.

## Classifieds

**Events**

# Calendar of Events

**Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.**

**Sept. 24-26** CLAC/WRF-sponsored conference exploring christian perspectives on shaping the workplace. At the Holiday Inn, **Burlington**, Ont. Plenary speakers: Don Posterski, Harry Antonides, Lee Hardy, Elwin Beukes and Marc Bacon. Free public presentation with Dr. John Bolt on Frid., Sept. 25, on: "Greed, Goodness, and God - Hope for Canada's Bottom Line." Info.: (905) 670-7386 or visit web page: www.interlog.com/~wrf/cwuf.htm

**Sept. 26** Organist John Vander Tuin plays a recital at 7:30 p.m., Recital Hall, The Music Group. 5205 Harvester Rd., #2, **Burlington**, Ont. Free admission!

**Sept. 27** Smithville CRC, **Smithville**, Ont., celebrates its 25th anniversary! Special worship service at 10 a.m. Everyone invited. Refreshments after the service. Info.: (905) 957-3449. (#)

**Oct. 4** Dutch worship service led by Rev. Jacob Kuntz, 3 p.m., CRC, 70 Hwy. 53 E., **Ancaster**, Ont.

**Oct. 7** Anniversary Convention 1998, Can. Fed. of Chr. Ref. Women, 11 a.m. (note!), Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Theme: "Great Is God's Faithfulness." Speaker: Rev. J. Kuntz. Music: Redeemer Choir & students. Tickets: $20 each. Send stamped, self-addressed envelope with cheque (payable to Convention 1998), to P.O. Box 335, Grimsby, ON L3M 4H8 (#)

**Oct. 11** First CRC, **Owen Sound**, Ont. celebrates its 50th anniversary! Variety program on Friday. Homecoming tea/dinner on Saturday. Special service on Sunday. Info.: Linda DeBoer at (519) 371-6192. (#)

**Oct. 17** "A Day of Encouragement and Training" (for deacons, elders and other caregivers) at Hamilton District Chr. High School, **Ancaster**, Ont. Theme: "Follow the Way of Love!" Featuring 54 workshops, including special sessions for elders and caregivers. Also six workshops geared especially towards persons with a disability and their caregivers. Cost $40. Contact your deacons for a registration form, or call Diaconal Ministries at (905) 646-4511. (#)

**Oct. 17** York Music Fest, featuring from Holland: Martin Zonnenberg (organist) and Marjolein de Wit (flutist), and from Canada: Willem van Suijdam (organist) and Heather Harpell (soloist), at 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **York**, Ont. Info.: (905) 772-3700.

**Oct. 17** "Break the Silence," a one-day conference to inform and educate people on the effects of pornography, presented with the support of the Alliston Christian community. From 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Banting Memorial High School, 203 Victoria St., E., **Alliston**, Ont. For info. and to register call (705) 435-3893.

Ontario Christian High School Students are invited to attend the

# ONTARIO CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION FAIR

October 5-9, 1998

Featuring the following colleges and universities:

Trinity Western University · Dordt College · Tyndale College & Seminary · Calvin College · RBC Reformed Bible College · Trinity Christian College · Redeemer College · The King's University College

Visiting the following Christian high schools:

Contact the high school for more information

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Monday, Oct. 5: | 8:30 | QUINTE CHS, Belleville (613) 962-7849 |
| | 1:00 | DURHAM CHS, Bowmanville (905) 623-5940 |
| Tuesday, Oct. 6: | 9:00 | TORONTO District CH, Woodbridge (905) 851-1772 |
| | 1:00 | WOODLAND CHS, Breslau (519) 648-2114 |
| Wednesday, Oct. 7: | 9:00 | SMITHVILLE District CH (905) 957-3255 |
| | 1:00 | BEACON CHS, St. Catharines (905) 937-7411 |
| Thursday, Oct. 8: | 9:00 | HAMILTON CHS, Ancaster (905) 648-6655 |
| | 1:00 | LONDON District CSS (519) 455-4360 |
| Friday, Oct. 9: | 8:30 | LAMBTON CHS, Sarnia (519) 337-9122 |
| | 1:00 | CHATHAM CHS (519) 352-4591 |

**Events**

## Our Year of Jubilee

*Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of St. Catharines, Ont., is celebrating "50 years of Chr. Ref. Presence in the Niagara Peninsula." We are thankfully remembering the blessings we have received with a special Thanksgiving service on* ***Oct. 18, 1998, at 3:30 p.m.*** *All former pastors, former members and friends are invited to celebrate with us on that date. For more info. call the church at* ***(905) 934-0631****; or* ***(905) 937-0314.***

## Break the Silence

A one-day conference to inform and educate people on the effects of pornography in our society.
**Saturday, October 17, 1998, at Banting Memorial High School, 203 Victoria St. East, Alliston, Ont.**
**Info.: (705) 435-3893**

## An Invitation to Friends of
### Stan de Jong and Christian Courier

Friends and former colleagues of Stan de Jong are cordially invited to come to a reception honoring Stan's service to the Christian community on his retirement from *Christian Courier* as publisher and manager, and recognizing Corrie's faithful companionship.

The stand-up event will be held at Jubilee Fellowship Christian Reformed Church (13 Wilholme Dr., St. Catharines) on

**Friday, October 16, 1998 at 7:30 p.m.**

*Best wishes only, please.*

**RSVP before Oct. 9, 1998.**
Phone or write Bert Witvoet at 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1. Phone: (905) 682-8311; Fax: (905) 682-8313; e-mail: cceditor@aol.com
"For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation" (Ps.149:4).

*Stan de Jong (r.) in discussion with former president of* **Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.,** *Marinus Koole.*

News

# Ecumenical guidebook highlights Christian family resources

**Alan Doerksen**

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. — Denominational fences do more than keep flocks safe. They also tend to enforce an inward look and prevent them from enriching each other.

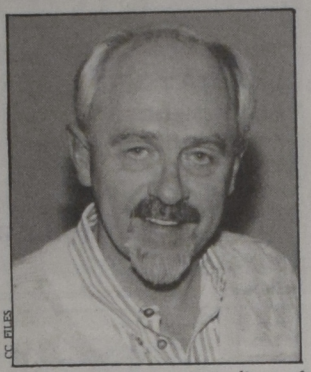
To counteract that impoverishment, World Vision Canada has just published the resource guidebook *Top 50 World Vision Canada Recommended Family Resources for Canadian Churches.*

Christian groups in Canada are producing many valuable books and videos about topics such as abuse prevention, marriage and single-parenting. The problem is that many Christians are unaware of what's available beyond their own denominations.

"Lots of innovative work is being done by virtually every Christian denomination and group in Canada to provide families with self-help books and other resources, but there's little cross-pollination," says World Vision's vice-president Don Posterski. "The guide addresses this problem."

To research the 32-page booklet, World Vision reviewed family resource materials from every major denomination and Christian group in Canada, from the Christian Reformed Church to the Vineyard Fellowship.

Catharine Crawford did the background research for the booklet. She spoke to many church leaders and churchgoers, and reviewed hundreds of family resources for the project. Posterski was the senior editor and Chuck Ferguson, also of World Vision, was the project editor.



CC FILES

*Don Posterski, senior editor of World Vision's resource guidebook.*

## Mainline, evangelical contrast

Results from the research showed that the United, Anglican, Mennonite and Pentecostal churches produce the largest volume of family resources. But many denominations do not produce their own video or print materials. Instead, their local churches sometimes buy books and videos from non-denominational Christian publishing houses, such as David C. Cook.

According to the guidebook, mainline denominations are more likely to emphasize social awareness, skill building and faith development, and are comfortable integrating "secular truths" into resource material. In contrast, evangelical denominations tend to choose family resources that emphasize biblical norms, Christian distinctiveness and provide opportunities to share the Gospel.

World Vision found the most common type of family resource used by Canadian churches focuses on adult education and ministry, especially parental skill development.

But few resources are available from any church for single Christian parents or families living in poverty. Researchers also noticed a lack of resources that provide skill building for children and youth.

## Skills and social awareness

In researching the booklet, World Vision focused on four key areas:

- skill building (resources that focus on practical skills such as improving communication in a family);
- faith-life education (looking at how Christians nurture and raise a family in faith);
- social awareness (focusing on social issues such as peace from a faith perspective);
- special topic resources (with a unique focus or distinct theological approach).

Each Christian group was asked questions to determine how useful a resource could be to other Christian groups. Sample questions were:

- Does the resource use an integrated approach which brings together the best of evangelical and ecumenical traditions?
- Can the resource be used in a small church with only one staff person?
- Is the material relevant for two-parent, single-parent and blended families?

The top 50 resources included *Fire in the Rose,* a two-year program, produced by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections, which helps congregations to explore the nature and consequences of abuse and to create ministries of healing and prevention in the church and community.

*The Journey Ahead: A Bible Study for Expectant Parents* is published by Presbyterian Publishing House (U.S.) and is available from the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

*Parenting Alone,* a study guide for single parents from the non-denominational publisher David C. Cook, helps parents dispel negative labels, rebuild a positive identity and help their children heal from separation and loss. This is one of seven resources published by David C. Cook in the Top 50 list.

Each listing contains essential information about each resource, such as where it is available, who the publisher is, and who the intended audience is.

Although the Christian Reformed Church was consulted, and many of its resources are extensively used by other denominations, none of those resources appear in the guidebook.

World Vision's guide costs $5.00 and is available by calling Chuck Ferguson, Project Editor at World Vision at 1-800-268-1650, Ext. 3261.

# *Three-quarters of Americans discuss faith at work*

## Women lead in all categories

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (EP) — Most Americans (70 per cent) talk about faith in the workplace — and half say they talk with co-workers about religion at least once per month, according to a Lutheran Brotherhood nationwide survey of adult Americans by Yankelovich Partners.

"Religion and work are important aspects of many people's lives," says David Rustad, spokesperson for Lutheran Brotherhood. "Since Americans spend so many hours at work, it's not surprising that conversations about religion crop up among co-workers."

Women are twice as likely as men to discuss religion at work more than once per month (29 per cent vs. 15 per cent). Americans in rural areas are also more likely to talk about religion at work compared with people in the suburbs (28 per cent vs. 17 per cent). People living in the South are the most likely to talk about religion at work compared with other U.S. regions.

The more often people attend church, the more likely they are to have religious conversations with co-workers. People who talk about religion at work include most weekly churchgoers (85 per cent), three-fourths (76 per cent) of people who attend church monthly and just over half (54 per cent) of those who rarely or never go to church.

Since religious discussions at work are fairly common, it's not surprising that many people know the religion of their boss. Four out of 10 (42 per cent) say they know their supervisor's religious faith.

How often do people's jobs inspire them to pray? The survey revealed that more than half (55 per cent) of Americans have prayed for career guidance. Women are more likely than men to have prayed for help with job direction (64 per cent vs. 47 per cent). Interestingly, more college graduates have prayed for career guidance than people with less education — high school or less (61 per cent vs. 48 per cent).

"People seem to depend on their religious faith for support in their work life," says Rustad. "People probably pray for help finding jobs, guidance to work out problems at work and for support to be successful in their jobs."

**No Issue Next Week**

***In keeping with Christian Courier's publishing schedule (see page 5 box), there will be no issue on Oct. 2.***

## News Digest

### 'Cool Britannia'

LONDON, U.K. — The Lord Chancellor, head of Britain's judiciary, is tired of wearing a 17th century costume to work and has asked Parliament if he could, please, wear a suit, and save the knee breeches, silk stockings and buckled shoes for special occasions.

Only three months ago, the same Lord Chancellor learned that in the interest of safety and comfort he no longer has to walk backward in front of the Queen during the annual opening of Parliament.

Change has been in the air since Prime Minister Tony Blair swept into office 15 months ago, reports the *Globe and Mail.* Now it's called "Cool Britannia," home of a Prime Minister who walks around in his shirtsleeves.

### *From Oxford to sultan's throne*

BRUNEI — A snooker-crazy 24-year-old former Oxford student with a liking for Bon Jovi's music became heir in August to the throne of Brunei — a tiny, oil-rich country on the northern shore of Borneo.

At a 75-minute ceremony in the 1788-room royal palace, Prince al-Muhtadee Billah Bolkiah received a jewel-encrusted dagger, putting him in line to become the 30th ruler of one of the world's last absolute monarchies.

Until last year, Prince Billah was in Oxford, enjoying the carefree life of a student and sometime competitor at international snooker meets, under the assumed name of Omar Hassan, reports the *Guardian Weekly.*

### Skateboarder outreach

LANGLEY, B.C. — Langley Vineyard Church has created a skateboard heaven for rebellious teenagers, the *Toronto Star* reports. Youth pastor Iain Lovatt persuaded the evangelical church in this Vancouver suburb to build one of the finest indoor-outdoor skateboard parks in the area. This gives him the opportunity to hang out with skateboarders the way Jesus socialized with the outsiders of his time. Teens are flocking to the park.